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Brief History of Radio Swan

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1. On 17 March 1960, President Eisenhower approved a covert action program to bring about the replacement of the Castro regime. Within the propaganda framework of that program, an important objective was to create and utilize a high-powered medium and short wave radio station. CIA was asked to provide such a station, outside the continental limits of the United States, and have it ready for operation within sixty (60) days.
2. Swan Island, in the Caribbean, was chosen as an appropriate site. The United States Navy furnished CIA with splendid support: within sixty days, equipment had been brought from Europe, a landing strip was cleared on the island, and the station was able to go on the air on 17 May of the same year, precisely on schedule.
3. Originally it was planned that Radio Swan would be a clandestine station (utilizing a "classified missile and space project" as cover). Just prior to inauguration, however, it was decided the station should be a commercial one. This was at the request of the Navy, which reasonably argued that should their participation in construction of a black facility be known, explanations would be difficult.
4. Using a "commercial" station for the tactical and strategic tasks envisaged for Radio Swan is not, of course, the most desirable way to support a covert operation. The only practical method of operation is to "sell space". Thus, program time on Radio Swan was sold to various Cuban groups. These included organizations of workers, students, women, two publications in exile, two radio

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stations in exile, and several political groups. There were also programs created and controlled by CIA. Programs (on tape) were produced in New York, Miami, and later, on Swan Island.

5. Radio Swan effectively reached not only its target area of Cuba, but the entire Caribbean as well. Soon after broadcasts began Castro started jamming, but was successful in hindering reception only in the City of Havana. Scores of letters were received from all parts of Cuba to show that the station had listeners. As late as March 1961, a survey was made to determine the extent of listening coverage. An inexpensive ballpoint pen was offered to those listeners who would write in to the station. The reply was immediate: almost 3,000 letters from 26 countries. This barrage of mail included significant amounts from all parts of Cuba.

6. As Radio Swan progressed, it became the symbol of the anti-Castro effort within Cuba and of opposition to Castro throughout the hemisphere. Toward the end of 1960, the effectiveness of Radio Swan began to diminish. Although great numbers of Cubans still listened to the station, its credibility and reputation began to suffer as the result of statements representing the selfish interests of the Cuban groups producing the various programs. In the first place, these groups talked overmuch about their activities in Miami and the hard fight they were conducting along Biscayne Boulevard. Naturally, the Cubans who were suffering under the Castro dictatorship within Cuba resented this. Secondly, the Cuban programs became a fulcrum where the individual political ambitions of Cuban exiles in Miami were presented to the other Cubans in Miami, forgetting the all-important target audience within Cuba. Finally, each program fought

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with the other for "scoops". As time passed and the Cubans found that their sources of information were no better than the next fellow's, the program producers began to exaggerate in order to give their broadcasts a touch of sensationalism. They made statements which were obvious lies to the listeners. An example: One of the announcers stated that there were 3,000 Russians in a park in Santiago de Cuba -- the residents had only to walk to the park to see that this was untrue. Moreover, the various programs began to defy coordination. All programs but one told the Cuban militiaman that he would be a hero on the day that he defected from Castro. The sole exception told the Cuban militiaman that he would be hanged regardless of what he did. A prolonged effort was made by CIA to exert tighter control over the programs. The officers of Radio Swan called a meeting of all program producers and gave them a list of 30 propaganda points upon which they were all to coordinate before use in broadcasts. This action failed to achieve proper control.

7. As this unfortunate situation developed, the military operation was about to be launched. It was obvious that CIA could not allow uncoordinated programming to continue while the station attempted to provide tactical support to military forces. On the 27th of March 1961 each program producer received a letter from the management of Radio Swan informing him of the termination of his program. Broadcasting was not suspended. Rather, it was immediately replaced with a new, overall programming schedule--more broadcasting hours than before--which was implacably under CIA control. Also, CIA immediately began hourly news programs of a conventional nature on Radio Swan. Thus Radio Swan was converted into a station which

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provided the Cuban people with straight news as well as a program which stated its only function was to assist those who were fighting Castro within Cuba. This was the beginning of an intensified propaganda campaign directed against Castro. Within a few days after the change, Radio Mambi, a Cuban government station, said to its listeners, "the hysterical parrots of Radio Swan have recently raised their voices scandalously." On the day following these declarations by Radio Mambi, President Osvaldo Dorticos declared in a speech over another radio station, "Cubans must be alert for lies and attempts to destroy the revolution through psychological warfare." A Cuban newspaper, at the same time, repeated Dorticos' statement: "our enemies are intensifying psychological warfare to find weak points in our domestic front."

8. During the military action in Cuba, Radio Swan was used in tactical support of the strike force, as well as a means of communication to independent agents within the country. Radio Swan was monitored by hemisphere radio stations and by world news services, and was an important factor in presenting the desired picture of the fighting in Cuba to world opinion. Despite some press allegations, Radio Swan was not responsible for the wild rumors during those hectic days. It did, of course, engage in the varied activities that a clandestine radio station is called upon to handle on such an occasion. One of these activities was to implement, on a few hours notice and using a stand-by transmitter, the "Voice of the Escambray", the clandestine broadcast which bolstered the propaganda theme that at least some of the survivors of the strike force successfully reached the safe haven of the Escambray mountains.

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9. When it became obvious that the main attack on Cuba had been unsuccessful, Radio Swan deliberately anticipated Castro's victory statement by admitting that the Cuban Expeditionary Force had been stopped by Communist armament, but that many of the Freedom Fighters had been able to join resistance groups in the hills. Radio Swan then returned to a calm presentation of straight world news and over a period of one week changed from round-the-clock broadcasting to a normal schedule, avoiding all program content designed to incite the Cuban people. The producer of the consolidated program was instructed to present programs with a minimum of emotional content, but to continue the anti-Castro orientation through the selection of news items. At the present time, Radio Swan is broadcasting simultaneously over medium and short wave daily from 0500 to 0800, from 1230 to 1400, and from 1800 to 0015 (E.S.T.). The broadcasts are made up of hourly news, a CIA-produced consolidated Cuban program, and other commercial programs including the relay of WRUL's Cuban Unity Program. The clandestine Voz del Escambray still broadcasts at irregular intervals to keep up hope among the forces in opposition to Castro. Neither during nor after the strike phase has there been any criticism of Radio Swan from any country other than Cuba and the United States.

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INDEX OF WITNESSES

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FIRST MEETING

NAME	STATE DEPT. DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW		PAGE
	<input type="checkbox"/> Retain class'n <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Declassify	Change/classify to with concurrence of <u>OSD</u> after _____	
GENERAL GRAY	EO 12958, 25X	Date: <u>MAR 22 2000</u>	2
COLONEL KING	IPS/CR/IR by <u>[Signature]</u>		2
MR. STANULIS			3
MR. ESTERLINE			4
MR. BISSELL			4
MR. BARNES			6
COLONEL HAWKINS			7

SECOND MEETING

MR. BISSELL	2
COLONEL HAWKINS	6
COLONEL BEERLI	10
GENERAL GRAY	15
MR. HAYDEN	21

THIRD MEETING

COLONEL HAWKINS	2
COLONEL BEERLI	8

FOURTH MEETING

GENERAL McGARR	1
GENERAL GRAY	5
MR. BISSELL	7

FIFTH MEETING

GENERAL ERSKINE	1
GENERAL GRAY	2
LIEUTENANT COLONEL WALL	5

SIXTH MEETING

COLONEL MALLARD	2
MR. LYNCH	3
ADMIRAL DENNISON	6

~~SECRET~~
~~EYES ONLY~~

~~SECRET~~
~~EYES ONLY~~

INDEX OF WITNESSES

SEVENTH MEETING

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
ADMIRAL CLARK	1.
CAPTAIN CRUTCHFIELD	.
CAPTAIN KENSCHER	
COMMANDER McGRIFFIN	
LIEUTENANT COLONEL EGAN	3.
MR. McGEORGE BUNDY	8

EIGHTH MEETING

MR. ROBERTSON	1
MR. GEORGIA	6
MR. LYNCH	8
CAPTAIN RYBERG	9
GENERAL LANSDALE	12
COLONEL KINARD	14

NINTH MEETING

MR. [REDACTED]	1
MR. [REDACTED]	2
COLONEL KINARD	4
GENERAL BONESTEEL	6
SECRETARY McNAMARA	7
GENERAL WHEELER	13

TENTH MEETING

GENERAL GRAY	1
GENERAL BONESTEEL	5
SECRETARY RUSK	7

ELEVENTH MEETING

MR. BERLE 1

CONVERSATION BETWEEN GENERAL TAYLOR AND MR. THORSRUD

MR. GARFIELD THORSRUD 1

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~~SECRET~~
~~EYES ONLY~~

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~~SECRET~~

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INDEX OF WITNESSES

NINETEENTH MEETING

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
MR. ESTERLINE	1

TWENTIETH MEETING

DR. MIRO CARDONA	1
------------------	---

TWENTY FIRST MEETING

MR. DULLES	1
------------	---

CONVERSATION WITH MR. PHILLIPS

MR. PHILLIPS	1
--------------	---

CONVERSATION WITH COLONEL HAWKINS

COLONEL HAWKINS	1
-----------------	---

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23 April 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : First Meeting of General Maxwell Taylor's Board
of Inquiry on Cuban Operations Conducted by CIA

TIME AND PLACE: 1400-1800 hours, 22 April 1961, Quarters Eye

PARTICIPANTS : Investigating Committee Members

General Maxwell D. Taylor
Attorney General Robert Kennedy
Admiral Arleigh Burke
Allen W. Dulles

Department of Defense

Major General David W. Gray
Colonel C. W. Shuler
Commander Mitchell

CIA Personnel

General C. P. Cabell
C. Tracy Barnes
Colonel J. C. King
Jacob D. Esterline
Edward A. Stanulis
Colonel Jack Hawkins

1. After a discussion of procedural matters, it was decided that all papers and documents stemming from the inquiry would be retained by General Maxwell Taylor. Colonel J. C. King, Chief, Western Hemisphere Division, was designated recorder of the first meeting.

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-2-

2. Mr. Dulles, in his opening remarks, cited the document which authorized CIA to conduct paramilitary operations. This document, NSC 5412, was described as one of the most secret documents in the U. S. Government. Mr. Dulles said that under this authority CIA is directed to engage in activities such as the Cuban operation under the general supervision of the National Security Council. General Taylor indicated that he wanted a copy of this document to be made available to him for his study. General Gray indicated he had a copy and would give it to General Taylor.

3. Colonel King was then asked to describe Agency activities on the Cuban problem prior to the establishment of the Task Force, i. e., Branch 4 of the Western Hemisphere Division on 18 January 1960. In his remarks Colonel King stated that in late 1958 CIA made two attempts (each approved by the Department of State) to block Castro's ascension to power. The first attempt was made in November 1958 when contact was established with Justo Carrillo and the Montecristi Group. The second attempt was made on or about the 9th of December 1958 when former Ambassador William D. Pawley, supported by the CIA Chief of Station in Havana, Mr. [REDACTED] and Colonel King, approached Batista and proposed the establishment of a Junta to whom Batista would turn over the reins of government. Colonel King was queried by the Attorney General as to the approximate date that the Agency concluded that Castro was unacceptable to the U. S. politically, if not actually a Communist, and when this conclusion reached the Secretary of State and the President. Colonel King commented that there were reports as early as June or July 1958 during the period that sailors from Guantanamo were held by Castro forces which indicated beyond a reasonable doubt that the U. S. was up against an individual who could not be expected to be acceptable to U. S. Government interests. Admiral Burke also made reference to the fact that he had been in at least one meeting with Colonel King on or about 29 December 1958 in which officials of the Department of State, except for Under Secretary Robert Murphy, appeared to feel that Castro was politically compatible to U. S. objectives. Considerable discussion involving all members of the Investigating Committee followed on this point with the Attorney General requesting assurance that Agency reports at that time reached the highest authority. 06

4. Reference was made to the first few days of January 1959 in Havana when a primary target of the advance guard was the Communist files in BRAC.

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- 2 -

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-3-

5. Mr. Stanulis reported that on 21 September 1959 he assumed the responsibility for planning for potential Agency action in contingency situations that might evolve in Latin America. He stated that this was a staff position that conducted liaison with existing desks in an attempt to identify the existence or non-existence of basic information which was an essential preliminary to the planning of clandestine operations within any given country. Most of the countries of Central America (Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador) were identified as potential contingency problems because of the instability of their governments. The Isle of Hispanola -- Haiti and the Dominican Republic -- was a high priority target. In South America, Paraguay, Bolivia and Argentina were included among the countries which required review and potential action. Cuba, quite naturally, emerged as the number one target for contingency planning. Because of the national policy affecting Latin America, it was ascertained early in the survey that the operating desks did not have available in collated fashion the type of information that was required for planning purposes for covert operations. As a result of this discovery, the entire intelligence community was given a requirement to produce certain information on the various countries involved with special emphasis on Cuba as rapidly as possible. In time, a three-volume study was produced which included basic intelligence, political and psychological information, operational data, geographical information, selected potential areas for clandestine operations, and related operational data.

6. The Cuban situation continued to deteriorate rapidly and in December 1959, it was decided that CIA needed to consider urgently the activation of two programs:

A. The selection, recruitment and careful evaluation (including medical, psychological, psychiatric and polygraph) of approximately thirty-five (35) Cubans, preferably with previous military experience, for an intensive training program which would qualify them to become instructors in various paramilitary skills, including leadership, sabotage, communications, etc.

B. The instructor cadre would in turn, in some third country in Latin America, conduct clandestinely a training of additional Cuban recruits who would be organized into small teams similar to the U. S. Army Special Forces concept, and infiltrated with

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-3-

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-4-

communicators, into areas of Cuba where it had been determined numbers of dissidents existed who required specialized skills and leadership and military supplies.

At this time, the basic Agency concept of operations was that the members of the instructor cadre would never be committed to Cuban soil. The members of the paramilitary leadership groups would be introduced covertly into the target area.

7. As a result of this fundamental decision, Mr. Stanulis went to Panama in mid-December 1959 to survey certain isolated areas of Fort Sherman to determine the potential usefulness of these areas for the training of the instructor cadre. In addition to the survey, Mr. Stanulis [REDACTED] held meetings with CINCCARIB Lt. Gen. Ridgely Gaither, and CGUSARCARIB Major Gen. Charles Dasher, to familiarize them with the basic Agency thinking in the Cuban matter. 06

8. Mr. Esterline outlined the organization of the Task Force and the steps which led to the paper presented to the President on 14 March 1960 and approved 17 March 1960, which was the first authorization to mount an operation to get rid of Castro. General Taylor requested the original T/O of that Task Force. He also requested other T/O's, including the present one, which will illustrate the buildup of the Force.

9. Mr. Bissell discussed the 17th of March approval. The concept then presented persisted for approximately 10 months. There were four major courses:

A. Creation of a political opposition. This took 4 to 5 months and during that period it was found less and less possible to rely on the Cuban politicians.

B. Mass communications to the Cuban people.

C. Covert intelligence and action originating inside Cuba.

D. The building of an adequate paramilitary force outside Cuba which called for cadres of leaders.

10. The original budget did not provide for the mounting of an organization of the type which eventually developed.

11. General Taylor then requested that the exact procedure

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-4-

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-5-

followed in the clearance in this basic paper of 17 March 1960 be described.

12. Through 1958, 1959, 1960 and so far in 1961, weekly meetings have been held with the Assistant Secretary of State, his deputy, Special Assistant, and a representative from the Office of Special Operations in State, for the purpose of briefing them on the highlights of intelligence. Since the approval of the paper, they have also been kept informed in general terms of major operational aspects.

13. Mr. Bissell said that the language of the basic paper was general as we did not know then how large a force would be built up. During the autumn months of 1960, the military force took shape and the original concept went through subtle changes.

14. In June 1960, the FRD (Frente Revolucionario Democrático) came into being. This was one of the first orders of business. It was needed as an umbrella for the recruiting and training of a nucleus of a military force. The thinking then was that this military group would be used in small teams and serve as a catalyst for uprisings in Cuba.

15. The Attorney General then asked was it conceived that Castro could be overthrown with a catalyst force at that time. Mr. Bissell replied that the original concept was to generate various pressures on Castro including this force, and it was expected that the classic guerrilla pattern would be followed. The Attorney General then asked what step should we have taken at that time if we had known what we know now, and did we have any policy then. Mr. Dulles replied we did have a policy, which was to overthrow Castro in one way or another.

16. General Taylor asked if the plan was based on capabilities or on what we actually needed, to which Mr. Dulles replied in the negative. Mr. Bissell said we thought we could build up guerrilla resistance through teams being infiltrated to groups inside, which would lead to the formation of a large enough group to facilitate air drops of arms and other materiel.

17. Mr. Esterline said we had a navy of sorts which ran operations for the ex/infiltration of personnel and the introduction of arms and other materiel with better than 50% success. The buildup of guerrillas did not

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-5-

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-6-

occur as expected and the number of successful drops was very low. This led to the further expansion of our military force to the point that it had gotten beyond the covert state about 1 November 1960.

18. General Taylor requested the date that military training began. He was informed that thirty (30) selected leaders were sent to a jungle area at Fort Sherman in the Canal Zone in July 1960. These were all recruited and carefully screened by the FRD.

19. General Taylor asked if maximum effort was made to raise manpower. Mr. Esterline answered that at first we were very selective and the troops came in at a trickle. Later they came in at a greater rate than we could handle. Mr. Esterline described the method of selection and screening. General Taylor asked if figures were available as to how many ex-officers of the Cuban army were recruited and as complete a breakdown as possible of personnel.

20. Mr. Barnes stated that beginning about mid-November 1960, there were weekly discussions in the Special Group. Mr. Dulles said recommendations from the Task Force were considered at these meetings. Special Group references show that on 16 November 1960, the changing concept of the operation was noted by Under Secretary Livingston Merchant. By November 1960, it was recognized that guerrilla warfare operations in the Escambray were not going well; we were having difficulty with air drops and some change in approach was needed.

21. Mr. Bissell said that one of the problems at this time was the Department of State's concern about tainting Guatemala and Nicaragua if the size was augmented. The Agency was asked to consider withdrawing from Guatemala and setting up an American base. After further consideration, the use of a base in the continental U. S. was ruled out.

22. In answer to General Taylor's question as to what bottle-necks existed, it was stated that there were no bases immediately available for the training of large numbers of the troops and that recruits came in at a trickle until the political base was broadened.

23. The Attorney General asked what was the purpose of a Strike Force, to which Mr. Bissell replied they would administer a strike

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-6-

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-7-

which could lead to a general uprising or a formation of larger guerrilla units in the mountains with which dissidents could join forces. The Strike Force was not in repudiation of the guerrilla concept but in addition to it.

24. Col. Hawkins stated there never was a clear-cut decision in his mind policy-wise to use a Strike Force.

25. Mr. Bissell read excerpts from a memorandum of 8 December 1960 of a meeting of the Special Group where a changing concept had been presented by various members of the Task Force. General Taylor said that all members of the board want a copy of this paper.

26. Among the items requested in this memorandum, officers from the Special Forces for the training of the Strike Force were authorized, the use of an air strip at Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua was approved, supply missions were approved, and on Tuesday, 19 April, the use of American contract pilots was approved. Records are in General Lansdale's office.

27. General Taylor asked what discussions there were with President Eisenhower during this period and requested copies of any existing memoranda.

28. Mr. Dulles said that the only minutes of the meetings of the 5412 Group were prepared and kept by CIA. These could be consulted by authorized individuals of other departments.

29. Mr. Bissell quoted from the minutes of a 5412 meeting where doubt was expressed that a covert force could succeed and consequently overt action might be required. About 1 January 1961, recruiting was greatly stepped up.

30. In reply to General Taylor's question as to when did we reach concept number three, Mr. Esterline said about 1 March 1961. In January and February 1961, JCS teams were sent to the camps under special arrangement and furnished the necessary instructor force for training of a larger strike force.

31. The Board agreed that one set of papers only would be kept, these to be by General Taylor. Documents desired are:

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-7-

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-8-

- A. The 5412 Paper. General Gray has a copy in his possession.
- B. Basic paper of 17 March 1960.
- C. Tables of Organization beginning with the creation of the Task Force.
- D. Both communications plans.
- E. Chronology of events from 17 March 1960:
 - (1) CIA chronology.
 - (2) State chronology.
- F. Changes in concept.
- G. Data on both American and Cuban personnel.
- H. Supply plan.
- I. Training plan.
- J. Intelligence aspects.
- K. Reconstitution of facts and intelligence available when plans were approved.

32. It was agreed that the next meeting would be held at 1000 hours on Monday, 24 April 1961, in the Director's conference room.

J. C. KING

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- Copy #3 - Allen W. Dulles
- Copy #4 - Attorney General Robert Kennedy
- Copy #5 - Major General D. W. Gray
- Copy #6 - Richard M. Bissell, Jr.
- Copy #7 - Colonel J. C. King
- Copy #8 - Jacob D. Esterline

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17 MAY 1961

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Chronology of the Development and Emergence of the Revolutionary Council

1. As Castro's true position became progressively more apparent in the first half of 1959, much consideration was given by the State Department here and "The Country Team" in Havana to the possible posture of U. S. policy toward Cuba. The general conclusion reached in the latter part of 1959 was that any group or coalition of groups which could hope to supplant the Castro regime could gain popular acceptance only on the basis of continuing the revolution with more practical management and less nationalist, socialist and Marxist contact; the United States would have to disassociate itself from Batista elements which would rush to undo the revolution. Elements within the Department of State catalogued actual or potential opposition to Castro as follows:

- a. The Autenticos (Antonio de Varona).
- b. The Monticristi (Justo Carrillo).
- c. Triple A (Sanchez Arango).
- d. Catholic Labor and Youth.
- e. Ex-26 July Members.
- f. Ex-Batista elements.

2. While the foregoing analysis of the situation was in progress, the Agency's Havana Station, which as a matter of routine SOP had been in touch with anti-Castro elements since January 1959, stepped up its contacts, evaluation and assessment of individuals and/or groups, with the exception of former Batista followers, falling into the above categories.

3. As the project approached its stage of formalization, i.e. approval on the highest governmental level, the possible composition of a "junta" was discussed on the appropriate Assistant Secretary of State level. After the project was approved on 17 March 1960, the Department was kept fully informed of each step leading to the eventual formation of the FRD on 11 May 1960 and its advice on personalities and substance was sought regularly: There was no objection to the original Varona, Carrillo, Rasco, Artima (and later Sanchez Arango) constellation. Coordination with the Department continued throughout the entire project: In September 1960 the Department's advice was sought on the inclusion of additional personalities into the FRD Executive Committee, such as Manuel Ray; in January 1961 the problems inherent in the establishment of a "Provisional Government" were discussed both in terms of personalities and substance; on 13 February 1961 approval was received for the establishment of a Revolutionary Council with the understanding that there should be no U.S. interference and that the Cubans were to nominate anyone they saw fit as

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- 2 -

Council President; also, the President was to be free to select his own Council members. The current Council composition is the result of this understanding. (Biographies of FRD and Council members were previously transmitted to General Taylor.)

4. The FRD political platform and the Revolutionary Council's programs were the result of and responsive to guidance received from the Department of State. In the early stages of the project general FRD utterances fell into the broad category "restore the revolution." Later the FRD and Council statements became more specific on the basis of guidance received. By and large, the tenor and posture of the Council and FRD is liberal and fairly progressive; its legal framework is the 1940 Cuban Constitution; land reform is part of its program as is the possible nationalization of certain industries. None of the Council members desires to turn the clock back; there are naturally differences among the Cubans as to detail and pace for future actions.

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GENERAL MAXWELL D. TAYLOR

SUBJ: Second Meeting of the Green Study Group
(24 April 1961)

NOTE: The note at the top of page 15 before para. 48 refers to a 45-minute period when the CIA secretary was not present at the meeting. Although a duplication for the most part, in order to assure coverage of this 45-minute period, a copy of the Memo for Record of the afternoon meeting at CIA starting at 1350 on 24 April 1961, prepared by the Study Group Assistant from General Taylor's office, has been appended to the original report.

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24 April 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : SECOND MEETING OF THE GREEN STUDY GROUP

TIME AND PLACE: 1020-1700 hours, 24 April 1961, CIA Administration Building

PARTICIPANTS : Study Group Members

General Maxwell D. Taylor
Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy
Admiral Arleigh Burke
Director of Central Intelligence, Mr. Allen W. Dulles

Department of Defense

General David W. Gray
Commander Mitchell
Colonel Stanley W. Beerli
Colonel Ingelido

Central Intelligence Agency

General C. P. Cabell
Mr. Richard M. Bissell, Jr.
Colonel J. C. King
Mr. C. Tracy Barnes
Mr. Jacob D. Esterline
Colonel Jack Hawkins

1. Minutes of the first meeting held on Saturday, 22 April 1961, as prepared by Col. King, were passed to all members of the committee and read by them prior to the opening of today's session.

2. General Taylor suggested that since the President did not consider this study of the Cuban Project to be either an "inquiry" or an "investigation", that some other title for the group be agreed upon. Col. King's suggestion that it be called the "Green Study Group" was agreed to and General Taylor

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suggested that the first page of the 22 April minutes be amended to reflect this change of title in the heading of those minutes.

3. Gen. Taylor referred to the top of Page Five of the minutes of the first meeting in which a "Special Group" is mentioned and asked the identity of this special group. Mr. Barnes said that this was a special group that got into the activity at the change of phase (?) and that it was not the 5412 Special Group. Mr. Bissell promised to deliver to Gen. Taylor by the end of the day, copies of all memoranda prepared by the Special Group on Cuba.

4. Gen. Taylor said that he had asked the JCS to provide a recording secretary to keep a record of the proceedings of the committee and that Col. Inglelido would make his appearance during the course of the morning meeting. It was agreed Mr. [REDACTED] would keep a record of the morning session and that Col. Inglelido would thereafter take over. 06

5. The question of whether the meeting should be recorded was brought up and it was decided not to record the meeting unless a particular speaker wished to have his remarks taped.

6. Mr. Kennedy asked that notes on the meeting be provided all members. Otherwise, only one copy of the actual record of the proceedings, and documents presented in connection therewith, would be kept.

7. Mr. Bissell then commenced the discussion by resuming the chronological account of the development of the Project. He said on Saturday, 22 April, a review had been made of November and December, 1960, developments. By early January, the original concept of a 300-man force broken up into small teams for infiltration - after possible training in the United States - became shifted to the concept of a much stronger strike force. To Gen. Taylor's query as to whether this shift was covered by a formal paper, Mr. Bissell replied that there was no formal recording of the shift. The expansion of the forces in Guatemala was accelerated and on 12 January 1961, we received 38 officers from the Special Forces Group. Following the arrival of these officers at the camp, the character of the training changed.

8. At the end of January, 28 January to be precise, the President was briefed on our Agency plan. At this time, little more was involved than a presentation, largely oral, of the status and a decision was obtained to continue with the activities but there was no implication that military action would be undertaken. Gen. Taylor asked if this was the first time the plan had been presented to the President and Mr. Bissell said yes, but added that the President did not offer an opinion concerning it. Mr. Bissell said we were seeking authority to continue all our activities--overflights, etc. and to call attention to the fact that we were recruiting and moving men and accumulating material and expending money against mere contingencies, and that we were anxious to present our plan to Gen. Lemnitzer.

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(Gen. Gray was asked to provide a copy of this plan from his file. He remarked that this was the plan which the JCS had approved on 3 February 1961).

9. Mr. Bissell stated that on or about 17 February 1961, another meeting, including the President, was held. By this time the JCS had evaluated the military plan which had been developed by Col. Hawkins. Gen. Taylor asked if this plan was considerably different from the final plan adopted and was answered affirmatively. At this February meeting, we felt a sense of urgency as the military plan called for a D-Day of 5 March. At the 17 February meeting, it became clear that there would be no immediate decision and that the plan would have to "slip" by one month. It was recalled that the President, the Secretary of State, Mr. Dulles, Mr. Bissell, Mr. Barnes, Gen. Gray, Col. Hawkins, Mr. Mann and Mr. Berle and possibly others, were present. Gen. Taylor asked if the outcome of that meeting was to decide to let D-Day slip and Mr. Bissell answered affirmatively adding that certain questions had been raised with respect to military implications.

10. Mr. Bissell then read from a paper he had prepared on 11 March which was a statement of the status of preparations, actions, timing and possible alternate courses of actions. This was presented at a meeting attended by much the same persons who attended the 17 February meeting. At this juncture, Mr. Dulles called to the attention of the committee a copy of Mr. Bundy's record of action of the 28 January meeting (of the NSC?). He stated he had no authority to disseminate copies but he would read it, which he did. The paper reported that the Director of Central Intelligence had reported on the situation in Cuba, that Cuba was rapidly becoming a communist state and that the United States had undertaken a program of covert action, propaganda, sabotage and assistance to exiles. The paper reported that the present estimate of the Department of Defense was that no program existed at this time which had capability of correcting the situation. The President, according to the document, authorized the continued activities of the Agency, including overflights. The Department of State was instructed to propose actions which could be taken in concert with other countries of the hemisphere, such as Brazil and Colombia. Mr. Dulles read the paper in full and stated it was available at any time to members of the committee.

11. Mr. Bissell read from a memorandum of the 11 March meeting concerning the status of immediate alternative courses of action:

- A. Use of force in such a way as to minimize appearance of an invasion, including amphibious infiltrations by night.
- B. Commit the FM force to a surprise attack, accompanied by use of tactical air force.
- C. Employ two successive landings - one a diversionary force to be followed by landing of the main force 24 hours later.

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- D. Send the force into an inaccessible area where it could hold the beachhead for considerable time.

"A" and "D" were included because at the 17 February meeting, the President and the Secretary had urged an examination of all possible alternatives. No affirmative decision came out of the 11 March meeting.

12. Mr. Dulles then proceeded to read the statement of action of the meeting of 8 February. (A discussion of the two February dates ensued-- 8 February and 17 February--with Mr. Bissell conceding that there was no meeting on 17 February, but that the paper had been prepared for a meeting which had been cancelled or postponed.) Mr. Dulles stated that the President was not present at the 8 February meeting but the discussion resulted in a decision by the President to authorize the encouragement of the establishment of an exile Junta and Revolutionary Council and discussion with exile leaders looking toward such a development. No other action pending further word from the President, was authorized.

13. Mr. Dulles then read from a paper covering the 11 March meeting, noting the President had decided on the following courses of action:

- (1) Every effort should be made to assist the Cubans to form a political organization. This is to include publicity for the leading political figures.
- (2) The United States Government should prepare a "White Paper" on Cuba and assist the Cubans to do the same.
- (3) The Department of State would explore possibilities of a de marche in the United Nations (?). CAS
- (4) President expects to offer United States' support for Cubans to return to their homeland. However, best plan for achieving this has not yet been presented. New proposals for action should be submitted.

Gen. Taylor commented that it would appear the President was favorable to the concept but was not satisfied with the proposals to date.

14. Mr. Bissell then read an account of a 15 March meeting. According to this paper the plan for the Cuban operation submitted on 7 March 1961 was unacceptable as it was not a program of infiltration but a World War II type of assault. That in order for a plan to be politically acceptable it must:

- A. Be an unspectacular landing at night in an area where there was a minimum likelihood of opposition.
- B. If ultimate success would require tactical air support, it should appear to come from a Cuban air base. Therefore, territory seized should contain a suitable airfield.

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The paper contained a brief outline of a second military plan prepared by Col. Hawkins which was approximately the plan later adopted.

15. Mr. Bissell next read from notes on a meeting held on 16 March, at which time two operations were proposed:

- A. Trinidad - Probably an opposed landing in daylight with air support required.
- B. Zapata - Unopposed landing with no tactical air until opposed.

Consequently, as of 16 March, there were two plans still under consideration as indicated above. Between the 16th of March and the end of March another postponement was called due to the visit of Prime Minister MacMillan. The target date for action was postponed to 10 April, later to 15 April and finally to 17 April.

16. Mr. Bissell then read from a paper covering a meeting held on 12 April. By this time, the plan had crystallized and this covered the concept of the operation:

- 1. Modification of air plans to provide for air operations limited basis on D-2, and again on D-Day. Shortly after the first strike on D-2, Cuban pilots would land at Miami. Other details not discussed.
- 2. Diversion or cancellation. Not feasible to halt embarkation but if necessary, ships could be diverted.

Gen. Taylor asked why it was not feasible to halt the embarkation and Mr. Bissell replied that the staging and loading of the troops was already underway. Mr. Bissell said that approval was given on continuing stages but that on April 12, D minus 5, the President still had the power to stop it. Staging started D minus 7 and 2/3s had already been moved from camps and first vessel sailed on D minus 6 and the last on D minus 4. Mr. Kennedy commented that the plan appears to have been approved but the "GO" signal not given. He asked with whom the plan had been coordinated. Mr. Dulles stated that an Internal Departmental Task Force had been set up early in March 1961 and various tasks were assigned to the separate departments. The IDTF was composed of representatives from State, Defense and CIA, specifically, Mr. Braddock, former Charge at Habana representing State, Gen. Gray representing Defense, and Mr. Barnes, representing CIA. At the end of the 16 March meeting agreement was reached to set up the IDTF. Mr. Bissell said it was the sense of the 16 March meeting that the Zapata plan was preferable. Admiral Burke commented that the JCS did not agree at that time. Mr. Bissell stated there was a review of the plan by the JCS and that Gen. Gray would later elaborate on that.

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17. Mr. Bissell stated that by 12 April the plan had crystallized but we still had no "go ahead" signal, whereupon Mr. Kennedy asked how we came to that conclusion and how was it actually worked out. He asked if anyone formally presented a plan for approval. When actually did the President and others examine the plan and give it their approval. Gen. Gray stated that 16 March was the date. Gen. Taylor asked if it was approved on that date and Mr. Bissell stated it was approved as the plan to be implemented but that no "go ahead" signal was given. Gen. Taylor inquired as to what the JCS had done with respect to the plan and Adm. Burke replied that on 15 March 1961, the JCS was briefed on the alternate plan and that the evaluation concluded that the alternate Zapata plan was considered the most feasible. He then started to discuss the three alternatives when Gen. Gray interrupted with the suggestion that the discussion was getting out of step; that the Trinidad plan should be discussed first and then the three alternative plans.

18. Col. Hawkin's Presentation--Before going into the details of the Trinidad plan, Col. Hawkins said he would like to provide background information showing what factors were available and factors not available in connection with planning of that Project. He stated that when one is confronted with the requirement for non-attribibility you introduce tremendous difficulties for a covert plan. For example, in a regular military operation, you know what forces you have, bases, state of training, etc., but in a RM covert plan you don't know much of anything. He said that last September when he joined the Project, the question of bases for the strike force and for supplying guerrillas in the mountains was not resolved. The only bases available were two bases in Guatemala. These were training bases, a shelf on the side of a volcano with room for 200 men at most (we ended up with 1400.) These were the training facilities - which were very poor.

19. The air base in Guatemala was 750 miles from Central Cuba--too far for supply operations. C-46's could not reach Eastern Cuba with satisfactory loads. C-54's could. The distance was too great for tactical air operations using B-26 or smaller planes. All sorts of studies were made to locate a satisfactory base. The United States was ruled out but Col. Hawkins did not agree with the reasoning therefore. The [REDACTED] with respect to their islands in the area but without success. Consequently, we had no base from which to conduct satisfactory operations. However, we later learned that President Somoza of Nicaragua would cooperate and we selected Puerto Cabezas as the site since it had an airfield, dock facilities, and other advantages. We were still 500 miles from Central Cuba, still far but feasible. (X)

20. Late in the autumn of 1960 we feared we would lose Guatemala bases and recruiting stopped, and we looked around for other bases. We could never be sure how many troops we could get as the recruiting was often slowed down due to political infighting of exile leaders.

21. Training--We did not have facilities for RM training. Last fall we only had four CIA personnel. On 28 October, Col. Hawkins requested three

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Special Forces teams - a total of 38 people - for training the forces in Guatemala. Because of political considerations, it was two and a half months, 12 January 1961, before they got there. We were facing amphibious operations, the most difficult of all military operations, and we had no ships. The question was: should we buy ships, recruit crews, or should we charter ships? We finally bought two LCI's in Miami, not fitted for landing troops but we modified them, we recruited Cuban crews, it took months (until January 1961) to get the ships to sea. The crews were made up of former Cuban navy personnel. We also recruited American contract personnel for these ships, the two LCI's. These two ships could carry only 150 men so this did not answer our problem. We had to charter ships. We contacted a Cuban ship owner named Garcia who had six small freighters of the 1500-2000 ton variety. This man, Garcia, offered the most and asked the least of all the Cubans we were in touch with. He asked that we cover the operating expenses. At first we wanted two ships for our 750-man force. We armed the LCI's and kept them as command ships. We also used them for other operations such as the raid on the Santiago refinery.

22. Air Picture--This was a problem in the autumn of 1960. We had few trained crews. There was always the question of whether the Cubans would measure up. We didn't know whether the air force was adequate. The covert approach is extremely difficult. RM operations of any size at all cannot be covert. Col. Hawkins commented that we may have to adjust our thinking to the need for coming out in the open as our enemies are doing.

23. Policy Questions--Policy questions had a bearing on our plans. Some unanswered questions by early January were these:

- Will a strike be conducted?
- Will an air operation be permitted?
- Will American pilots be used?
- Will Nicaragua be used as a base?

Col. Hawkins then read from a paper dated 4 January 1961, which he had prepared. This paper outlined the current status of our operation and set forth policy questions which had to be resolved. (Col. Hawkins provided a copy of this paper for inclusion in the record. Consequently, no attempt is made to reproduce it in these minutes.) (TAB-A)

24. From the above mentioned paper, Col. Hawkins outlined the concept of the strike operation:

1. Securing of a small lodgement on Cuban soil by 750-man force.
2. This to be preceded by tactical air strike which would destroy the air force, naval vessels.

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3. Following this other military targets would be attacked, such as tank parks, artillery parks, motor transport, etc.
4. Close air support for strike force on DoDay and thereafter.
5. The initial mission was to seize a small area preferably with an air field and access to the sea, with contingency plans for air drops if field and port not available.
6. Force should try to survive and not break out until time opportune or U.S. intervened.
7. Expected widespread popular support and general uprisings.
8. If this did not develop, there was the possibility that the fighting might bring on assistance from other Latin American countries and the U.S. with the resultant fall of Castro.
9. Plan called for continuation of regular FM operations: sabotage, guerrillas, etc.
10. If driven from the beachhead, the force would continue guerrilla operations.

25. Gen. Taylor stated that this concept raised fundamental questions. What was the magnitude of the air cover you expected and did you expect to stay on shore indefinitely, and if so what size force did you plan to employ? Col. Hawkins said that the force was to have been composed of 750 men and that they expected to have an airforce of 15 B-26's, whereupon Gen. Taylor questioned whether 15 B-26's could have done all that was expected. Col. Hawkins explained that the plan was to eliminate the enemy air force. We anticipated that he had twelve operational planes, including six B-26's, 4 T-33's, and from two to four Sea Furies. This turned out to be a fairly accurate estimate. We felt that fifteen B-26's could do the job.

26. Gen. Taylor asked on what intelligence did we base our belief that there would be popular uprisings. Col. Hawkins said that we had our own agents up and down the length of Cuba - some 60 to 70 agents including 25 radio operators - who gave us a picture of large numbers of people begging for arms in order to fight Castro. We had difficulty supplying the arms via the air drops. The Cuban pilots were not sufficiently qualified for this work. The flights were rarely opposed but the aircraft encountered difficulty in finding the drop zones. (Mr. Esterline commented that at no time were our surface craft interdicted by Cuban navy craft and surface deliveries were much more successful).

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27. Col. Hawkins then quoted other extracts from his paper of January 4, summarizing the size of our air force - ten B-26's but only five pilots; seven C-54's; a few C-46's - with grossly inadequate transport crews. Five hundred Cubans training in Guatemala. FRD (Frente) recruitment not going satisfactorily. Special recruiting teams being sent from Camps to Miami to assist. Expect to have 750 men in time but unless Special Forces training they could not be ready before late 1961. All this time, Col. Hawkins said, Castro was building up his military capability and in September we thought he still had 75% of the population behind him, although his popularity was then declining. Gen. Taylor asked in retrospect what would have been the best timing (for the strike to have occurred?) and Col. Hawkins replied early March.

28. Col. Hawkins said at the time of the preparation of his paper of 4 January we did not know whether the new administration would approve the project and this needed to be resolved immediately in order that the operation could be stopped and considerable expense saved. He therefore recommended that the Director of CIA attempt to get a decision from the President-Elect. Col. Hawkins felt that if the decision was made in mid-January the force could be ready to move by the end of February. We were then under pressure from the Guatemalan government. Time was not entirely in our favor. We anticipated that Castro would soon have a jet capability. Heavy equipment was being assembled throughout the country and the establishment of a police state was advancing rapidly. In his paper he recommended that the operation be carried out not later than 1 March 1961.

29. Col. Hawkins terminated reading his paper. Mr. Dulles asked what disposition was made of it and Col. Hawkins said it was directed to Chief of WH/4 (chief of the Cuban operation). Mr. Esterline, C/WH/4, said he directed it to higher authority. Gen. Taylor asked for the identity of the higher authority and was told it went to the Chief of the Division (Col. King), the Assistant Deputy for Plans (Mr. Barnes), and the Deputy for Plans (Mr. Bissell). Mr. Bissell stated that the paper did not go much further than his office, and added that we did eventually get the air crews, the B-26's, etc. Avon Park was readied. American contract pilots were readied. He stated that with respect to the major policy decisions raised by Col. Hawkins, these issues will emerge when limitations on use of the tactical air force are discussed. Mr. Esterline commented that we battled with State for months and we only got watered down more and more for our efforts.

30. Mr. Kennedy asked why, if Col. Hawkins' presumptions and conclusions were correct, and if State and others felt it wasn't feasible or desirable, wasn't the project called off? Mr. Bissell explained that what actually happened was that Col. Hawkins' position was stated and first there was agreement on air strikes on D minus 2, D minus 1, and D-Day; and then later an absolute minimum calling for strikes on D minus 1 and D-Day. And what finally was called for was a maximum effort on D-Day.

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31. Mr. Kennedy asked Col. Hawkins if he would have approved the operation as it ultimately came to occur - that is, would he have or did he approve of the watered down plan? Col. Hawkins replied that he did not approve but must say this with qualifications. He said he always maintained that we must get rid of the opposing air force. He insisted the three major airfields must be attacked. He was not in favor of limiting the number of aircraft (he eventually got the number raised) - he was not satisfied with the limited application of air power and he thought we would have had a satisfactory sweep on D-Day of all the Cuban airfields. Gen. Taylor asked how many planes we had on D-Day and Col. Hawkins stated fifteen. Admiral Burke asked if all the factors raised by Col. Hawkins were ever listed in check off form - and were they checked off as achieved? The reply was that we had no formalized check list but we knew where we stood as we went along. Col. Hawkins said we had the capability on the morning of D-Day with the 15 B-26's but we weren't given an opportunity to do the job.

32. Col. Beerli stated that prior to D-Day we had an accurate count of the enemy air force and knew where every craft was kept. He had a total of 36. Col. Beerli described them by category. We estimated 50% of these planes were in flying condition. On the D-minus 2 strike we destroyed over 70% of their air power. We had 15 planes left to employ to knock out the remainder. Comint showed the enemy planes were concentrated at San Antonio. On D-Day one Sea Fury was knocked out and another fell into the ocean. They were down to three T-33's. Gen. Taylor asked then why did the strike fail? Col. Beerli replied that we had strikes planned for San Antonio, Libertad, and 11 other targets, but were not permitted to carry them out. Gen. Taylor commented that we had done well with our air force and Col. Beerli replied that we had them pinned down and we based this belief on Comint and photography. He added that every aircraft we lost was due to the T-33's. Mr. Kennedy asked how many aircraft did Castro have on D-Day. Col. Beerli said he had 2 Sea Furies, B-26's, and 3 T-33's. Col. Hawkins repeated that we had planned a fifteen plane raid at dawn on D-Day but were not permitted to carry it out. Mr. Dulles asked if subsequent events bore out the correctness of our air O/B and Col. Hawkins replied in the affirmative.

X 33. Mr. Kennedy asked for information on the report that MIG's were in the air. Col. King said that MIG's did not appear until the final date. They may have been in crates and quickly assembled. Mr. Dulles commented that aerial photography never picked up any MIG's. Mr. Bissell said we had no reports from agents of MIG air flights. Gen. Taylor asked concerning the characteristics of the T-33's and was told they are jet trainers armed with two 50 cal. machine guns. Gen. Gray said that on D plus 1 a request was made of our destroyers to attempt to locate the field. Col. King said the report of MIG's in crates indicated San Julian air base. Col. Beerli terminated his remarks by saying that as of D-Day the air picture was in our favor.

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34. TRINIDAD PLAN. Col. Hawkins then proceeded to discuss the Trinidad Plan. He utilized charts showing the composition of the strike force and maps of the areas discussed. First he described the composition and organization of the assault force and how it was trained. He said at first there was no one to train the troops so he sent Col. Egan and Capt. Monk with directives to conduct individual training, small unit training, etc., and an 8 week course was provided. With large influx of recruits, concurrent recruit, small unit and combined training had to be conducted. Gen. Taylor asked where they found room in view of Col. Hawkins previous statement of the small shelf on the volcano side, and Col. Hawkins explained that we finally got permission to use a finca belonging to Mr. Alejos of Guatemala for training purposes. However, firing practice was done in the mountains.

35. Noting that Tanks appeared on the chart, Mr. Kennedy asked if tanks did get ashore and if they were camouflaged or disguised. Col. Hawkins said that tanks were put ashore and Gen. Gray added that these were the same type of tanks given to other countries. Col. Hawkins stated that we trained the tank crews at Ft. Knox and we had no trouble whatsoever. The Cubans knew where they were being trained and Col. Hawkins said that was a good example of how our own soil is better suited for training from security and other standpoints.

36. In arriving at the Trinidad plan, Col. Hawkins said that he studied the entire island carefully. He then decided that the Trinidad area with the nearby Escambray mountains was the place. Gen. Taylor asked if he had the benefit of photography in reaching his decision and Col. Hawkins said he had no photography until one flight was flown in November with not too satisfactory results. He then proceeded to describe the Trinidad area - the town of some 18,000 population, the nearby port to the south, named Casilda - with its docks - many good beaches for our purposes - good guerrilla country nearby with hills of 2,500 - 4,000 feet in which from 600-1,000 guerrillas were reported to be active who had been able to maintain themselves for six months, but were eventually eliminated. Although these were small groups with little equipment and poor supplies, it nevertheless took Castro six months to eliminate them. Therefore in considering the Trinidad plan it was felt that the force could if necessary move to the mountains and could exist in such terrain indefinitely. There were no approaches from the North that Castro could use, only other main road was from Santa Clara - this had a bridge over a river and a railroad bridge - and we were planning to knock out these two bridges. Other approach was from Cienfuegos - with bridges. The area was suitable for isolation. Also there was reason to believe that the Trinidad population was friendly. They had been supporting the guerrillas in the hills. We expected to pick up recruits from the Trinidad civilian population and we planned to bring in arms packs for 4,000 men and rapidly expand our forces. Another advantage if the force succeeded in maintaining itself and eventually breaking out was the possibility that we could have severed Cuba in the middle, creating great problems for Castro.

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37. Gen. Taylor inquired as to the date of the plan. Col. Hawkins said it was written in January and the JCS was briefed on the plan on 31 January. He remarked that the JCS, in an independent study, had also selected the Trinidad site as the most suitable for this type of operation. Gen. Taylor asked how did the JCS get into this matter and Gen. Gray replied that the JCS had already been asked to come up with a likely spot and that they had in mind a small invasion force.

38. Col. Hawkins then reviewed the strike plan as follows:

D-Day - landing

Prior D-Day - destruction air force

D-minus 1- attack aircraft on ground - also tank parks, artillery, etc.

H minus 6 - feinting operation off the West Coast of Pinar del Rio - destroy bridges

H Hour - Assault force lands on beaches - seizes high ground - another company moves inland and establishes self on forward slopes - another company on a separate beach - clear Casilda - airborne troops drop in heights over Trinidad.

39. Gen. Taylor inquired as to the known presence of Castro forces in the area. Col. Hawkins said we could never pin down the exact location of his forces. There were some 40,000 militia in the general area - with about 5,000 militia encircling the Escambray mountains. These were not making an aggressive effort to join battle with the guerrillas but would catch them as they came out for food. We evaluated the militia fighting qualities on what they did in the Escambrays and this was very low. He then went on describing the plan by saying that after seizure of the objectives we would enlist and arm civilians, we would use the hospital and other buildings for the force - we would coordinate with local civilian leaders and make contact with local guerrillas. We would use the local airport for resupply - but the airport could not take a B-26. In the event Trinidad could not be held, the plan was for the force to withdraw to the Escambrays where they would be supplied by air drops. This, Col. Hawkins said, was the beauty of the Trinidad Plan - it provided an alternative and safe area to move into if the original phase failed to achieve its objectives. Gen. Cabell commented that the concept called for a dawn landing. Col. Hawkins said the air strike called for attack on three air fields and the Managua military base, which had tanks and equipment which would have easily been destroyed by use of napalm but we were not authorized to use napalm in the operation. Gen. Taylor asked who said napalm could not be employed and Col. Hawkins replied that it was a decision of the National Government. Col. Hawkins listed in detail

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all the targets which we had selected for air attack - which included in addition to obvious military targets - the Havana power plant, microwave stations, refineries, etc. - and said all these things we wanted to do. Gen. Taylor asked if the air requirement varied with the change of plans and Col. Hawkins replied no.

40. Gen. Taylor asked aside from terrain what else was favorable and Col. Hawkins repeated his references to friendly population, nearby guerrillas, beaches as good as those of Zapata. He said the presence of enemy forces was a disadvantage of this plan as compared with the Zapata Plan. We did not think there was anyone at Zapata. Gen. Gray said that as far as could be determined there was only a police battalion at Trinidad. Admiral Burke commented that the size of the air field at Trinidad was another disadvantage - the field at Zapata being larger. Col. Hawkins reiterated that the principal advantage was being able to fall back into the mountains. At Zapata we presupposed an uprising but the beachhead did not last long enough. At Trinidad we might have had favorable civilian reaction - one agent told us he had 2,500 men wanting arms.

41. Mr. Kennedy asked if we had any communications from the island after D-Day indicating a desire on the part of the people to rise, and Col. Hawkins said yes there were requests for arms but air drops without the use of American pilots had never been successful. Gen. Taylor asked if there was an annex to the plan for supplying arms to anyone who did rise. Mr. Bissell stated that we had airplanes and supplies and were ready to respond to agent calls. We could have responded - there were 19 requests - most of them before D-Day. Mr. Kennedy asked if there were any after D-Day and Col. Hawkins said yes, but we couldn't service them since our aircraft were committed to try to deliver supplies to the strike force which had lost its supply ship.

42. Gen. Gray recalled that the Agency had prepared a summary of agent radio communications received - and messages from the beaches - on D plus 2 (TAB-B) and asked that a copy of that summary, which he found quite impressive, be furnished for the record.

43. Mr. Bissell said that we had anticipated domination of the air and therefore could have made daylight deliveries of arms in response to the many calls we had received. As it turned out we did not have the means with which to respond.

44. Mr. Esterline then informed the group that we had on hand one of the American pilots who survived the morning raid, and since he was planning to leave the city tonight, asked if the committee would like to hear his story this afternoon. Gen. Taylor said he would like to hear him after we finish the actual scenario and this should be sometime after lunch. The hour of 4 p.m. was set.

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45. Gen. Taylor asked what happened to the Trinidad Plan. Col. Hawkins replied that it was always opposed by the State Department - also the President wanted something that was less like an invasion. Mr. Bissell read from the record of the 15 March meeting which reported that Trinidad was not acceptable since it appeared like a WWII assault operation. Gen. Taylor asked if the Plan was rejected on 15 March and Mr. Bissell replied no, on 11 March. Admiral Burke commented that on 3 February the JCS had generally this same plan. Mr. Bissell said that the JCS first evaluated this plan early in February and Admiral Burke said that the JCS had made a number of recommendations aimed at strengthening the plan.

46. Mr. Bissell stated that we considered a variety of alternatives - one suggestion was that we seize a remote area and build an airfield from which to operate. Col. Hawkins then described the ground rules which had been established for the next plan:

1. It must call for a quiet, night landing operation. - nothing that might be viewed as spectacular.
2. It must include seizure of an airfield that would accommodate up to B-26 planes in order that air strikes which were to commence at dawn could be attributed to that field.

Col. Hawkins said we looked all over for an airfield in Oriente province but could find none that could handle a B-26. We built up the concept for an operation at Preston but the field would not support B-26's. We reconsidered the Isle of Pines - but rejected it because there were from 7,500-15,000 troops there and there were no suitable beaches for night landings. We thought of another plan for Trinidad involving landing troops who would go directly into the mountains - but there was no airfield. Finally, through photography, we found what we thought was a usable field - this was in the Zapata area - and this is what led us to this area. The plan was hastily put together. We got started about 15 March - after the 11 March meeting. An error in photographic interpretation had occurred. We believed there were 4,900 usable feet of runway in northern Zapata. One of the disadvantages was the 18 mile bay which meant we would have trouble getting people up there in daylight hours. We found a 4,100 foot field at Playa Giron. We would never have adopted the Zapata Plan if we had known that he had coordinated forces that would close in and fight as they did. The air field requirement was what led us into Zapata.

47. Col. Hawkins then described the moving of the troops from Guatemala to Nicaragua which was accomplished on three successive nights without incident. We were employing four merchant ships and two LCI's. They fanned out upon leaving Puerto Cabezas and later rendezvoused at approximately 40 miles off the coast. Col. Hawkins paid tribute to Capt. Redberg for his performance in handling the fleet. The ships formed convoy and proceeded to a point 5,000 yards off the beach.

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(Note: This account of the afternoon session is not complete inasmuch as the recording secretary was not present during the first portion of the session, having missed approximately 45 minutes of the meeting. However, the notes prepared by Col. Ingelido, who was present during the entire afternoon session, should cover this missing period).

48. (Gen. Gray was in the midst of discussing the JCS evaluation of the Trinidad Plan when note taking was resumed). He said the scheme of maneuver was basically sound. There was a need for civil officer type people to coordinate with the population, etc., and this was done. The original idea was that the guerrillas would join up with the Strike Force. The JCS thought it best to maintain a corridor and establish a link - he pointed out that one road runs from Santa Clara to the area - and a secure route for moving up into the hills. Without interference from the air, we estimated the Cuban Army could move men and materiel to the scene by D plus 2. At time of assessment there was one regiment of Cuban army near Santa Clara. We also were told the Cuban army was not concentrated but spread out. We figured it would take them a day to concentrate and another day to move the 100 miles to the scene.

49. Gen. Gray indicated that the publicity which developed during the final weeks of the project, much of it centering around the Revolutionary Council and its alleged plans, gave Castro notice that something was in the wind and time to mobilize his forces. Mr. Esterline explained that we were given the requirement of establishing a broad based revolutionary council. He said Cubans cannot keep quiet and before you knew it we had a Roman Circus on our hands - leaks to press, etc., both in Miami and New York. Gen. Taylor asked if the Revolutionary Council was aware of the operation. Col. King stated that the first word they had that the operation was going was on the evening of Friday, 14 April. Col. King and Mr. Barnes had gone to New York City to brief Dr. Miro - had met with the group - had dinner - and at midnight Col. King told Dr. Miro that at dawn on the following day some action would take place. Col. King cautioned Dr. Miro that there always seems to be a leak and that in the interests of the sons of some of the members of the Council, including Miro, and other relatives - Col. King told Dr. Miro to keep this information very much to himself. Dr. Miro said he would not even tell Dr. Varona, another member of the Council, and added that he would keep all members of the Council together the entire night.

50. Gen. Taylor said that what was inferred was that all this hoopla made execution of the plan more difficult and Gen. Gray said yes - that this permitted Castro to prepare - but if the target had been the Trinidad area he would not have been ready until the afternoon of D-Day. Mr. Barnes said that there was a great deal in the press - Tad Szulc and others - guessing

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as to dates - and all this developed during the last week - and this could not have been anticipated. Mr. Esterline commented that one or two of Mr. Reston's articles in the New York Times two or three days before the date were not at all helpful. He said that despite this we were able to move people from Guatemala to Nicaragua and the first anyone knew about the invasion was when they hit the beaches.

51. Gen. Gray said that another miscalculation was that the Cuban Army was not coordinated and thus we expected the strike force would be able to resist attack. In this respect Trinidad would have been difficult terrain for launching of attacks. While the Cuban Army could eventually have reduced the beach head, it was Gen. Gray's opinion that the beach could have been held for seven days. In considering the Trinidad Plan it was not considered that U.S. overt intervention would be necessary since the force could get to the hills. The ships were loaded with supplies on D minus 21, but it was always clearly understood that the President could always call off the plan. The ultimate success of the Plan depended on political factors - uprisings, possible OAS action, etc.

52. Gen. Taylor asked what provisions, if any, had been made for follow up support. Gen. Gray said that CIA was training additional personnel. He said Mr. Berle had sounded out certain South American countries but got no promise of military support. The plan called for the arming of local volunteers who were expected to join up with the force. Mr. Esterline said we had approximately 300 additional untrained troops - about 167 in Guatemala and the balance in Miami. Gen. Cabell pointed out that the original concept called for a 750 man force but that we actually committed in advance all our 1400 men rather than hold out for follow up. Gen. Gray said the key to the plan was popular uprisings all over the Island - which would pin down the militia in other areas. The militia in this area had proved to be friendly to the guerrillas and for this reason Castro had to bring others in from elsewhere.

53. Gen. Taylor asked Gen. Gray concerning the 30-70 evaluation they had given to the plan. Gen. Gray said this referred to the Trinidad Plan - that the percentages were roughly 30-70 and never ran more than 40-60. He then said that about this time Mr. Berle was appointed coordinator of Latin American affairs and Ambassador Willauer faded out of the picture. He said he had had meetings with the Berle group. Gen. Taylor asked if Mr. Berle got into the military aspects of the plan and Gen. Gray said not to any important degree - that he was mostly concerned with the political aspects. Col. King said that Mr. Berle was given one briefing on the Trinidad Plan.

54. Gen. Gray then stated that on 23 February a JCS evaluation team went to Guatemala to assess the troops and summarized their conclusions as follows: Based on general review of the military portion of the project and evaluation of the combat efficiency of the forces, such forces could attain

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the initiative - but the ultimate success of the operation would depend on the extent the strike forces served as a catalyst. Gen. Taylor said this new evaluation of the plan expected them to get ashore all right but success depended on their serving as a catalyst to a general uprising. Gen. Gray answered affirmatively. Gen. Gray stated that Col. Tarwater thought the air force was very well prepared but made certain suggestions for improvement.

55. Evaluation of the Zapata Plan. Gen. Gray said that the JCS first saw the Zapata Plan on 15 March and gave it a favorable evaluation as an alternate plan. This, he said, was done hurriedly. The JCS was briefed on the plan on 13 March; prepared its evaluation on the 14th of March, presented it on the 15th March and submitted it to the President on the 16th of March.

56. Mr. Bissell said three other alternatives were considered:

1. The Isle of Pines
2. The Preston Area
3. Alternate Trinidad Plan -
(landing at night, into the hills and at
daylight attack backwards to the beach head.

With respect to No. 3, Col. Hawkins said the plan really was for the force to move into the hills - and not attack backwards - and was a modification of the original Trinidad Plan.

57. Gen. Gray said that of the alternatives mentioned it was considered that the Zapata Plan was the most feasible but not as feasible as the original Trinidad Plan. Zapata depended on control of the air and the ability to secure the exits to make difficult the movement of enemy forces into the area. The plan called for the mining of all approaches but this was not executed. The evaluations were the essential part of the JCS contribution - however, we attended most meetings. Gen. Taylor asked if the evaluation which Gen. Gray had summarized was approved by the JCS and Gen. Gray responded affirmatively. Of the three alternatives the Zapata Plan was the best.

58. Mr. Kennedy said wouldn't you say that the JCS had approved this plan? Admiral Burke responded by saying that the paper does not say so - but in effect the JCS approved this plan - felt it had a reasonable chance of success. Admiral Burke added that the original plan had the area they would have selected - Trinidad. Gen. Gray stated that at no time did the JCS say that the Zapata Plan should not be carried out. Mr. Bissell said that the 16 March meeting summed it up as follows:

Trinidad Plan would provide more decisive results
at greater initial risk

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Zapata Plan provides less decisive results - and slower results - with less initial risk

Mr. Bissell commented that we felt and hoped the Zapata Plan would be less risky but recognized its limitations - less chance of a build up from friendly population.'

59. ^{was} Gen. Taylor said there appeared to be two points: At no point did the JCS recommend doing it - it merely commented on three alternatives - but where we made our mistake - we should have said - but did not - that this plan was not feasible. We had an opportunity to do more and we were responsible for approving it. Mr. Dulles stated that all the plans were exposed at high level. Admiral Burke commented that one difficulty was that Gen. Lemnitzer was there by himself - then corrected himself to say that Gen. Gray was with Gen. Lemnitzer at the high level meetings.

60. Gen. Gray stated that as we became associated we became more interested in trying to make it go. Mr. Kennedy asked if this wasn't the key to the whole thing - this wanting it to go? Mr. Dulles said we had these alternatives - we could carry out the plan or we could demobilize the strike force. Gen. Gray said that if we had ever written a National Concept - we would have had to rewrite it continually. Admiral Burke said that there naturally was confusion during the change of administration. We should have formalized this thing much earlier and in greater detail. The trouble was that only a few people of the Admiral's staff knew about it.

61. Gen. Taylor asked if the possibility of uprisings was discussed among all of you and Mr. Dulles answered yes. Mr. Dulles said the first plan was the shock plan - and in this plan we hadn't counted on immediate uprisings - this was longer range. He said there were objections on the political side to the shock effects - and we couldn't count on it succeeding.

62. Mr. Kennedy asked what the objective was on landing 600-1000 men on the shore. Mr. Dulles said to obtain a beachhead which would be built up. Mr. Kennedy then asked how a beachhead could be held against 300,000 troops - or against even 30,000 or 25,000. Mr. Dulles said the enemy would not have been able to concentrate all his troops on one spot. Mr. Kennedy then said that he thought that uprisings were an essential part of the JCS evaluation. Gen. Gray said that it did not anticipate immediate uprisings - but uprisings on a slower basis. Mr. Kennedy then directed a question to Admiral Burke asking if it was the Admiral's understanding that 1400 men could land - and without benefit of uprisings - could maintain their position for several weeks. Admiral Burke said they thought they might be able to hold their position but if they could not, that they would then become guerrillas. Gen. Gray said that we thought the Cuban air force would be knocked out. He said the men demonstrated they could fight effectively at night. Mr. Bissell added that we expected a landing in Pinar del Rio on D plus 7. Col. Hawkins added that we had reports of men wanting to join but reiterated that the real key was control of the air.

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63. Gen. Taylor then asked where is the concept? Gen. Gray said it is in the plan. The objective did not change. Here is the mission: To invade island of Cuba - with amphibious force - hold beachhead - provide catalyst for uprising - move in as guerrillas if beachhead not sustained. Gen. Taylor (checking language of mission) read: "--alternative 3 has all the pre-requisites necessary and would be able to sustain itself for several weeks but inaccessibility of population would effect support of Cuban population..." Gen. Cabell remarked that we meant joining up of forces and not necessarily civilian uprisings. Gen. Taylor stated it still becomes a choice between 3 - but with Trinidad preferred.

64. Mr. Bissell stated that the language about sustaining for several weeks indicates a change of thinking - a slower development with less prospect of initial success. If the area could have been held for two weeks there was a good probability of ultimate success - for with no air opposition we could have knocked out his microwave and forced him to voice - we could have learned his plans - we could have reinforced the brigade with another 500 men - the logistic problem would not have been difficult - but we did not knock out his air. Gen. Cabell stated that maritime re-supply would have been a factor - with no air opposition - and would have had an effect on the outcome.

65. Gen. Gray stated that following the decision on 16 March that the Zapata Plan should be pursued, the Inter-Departmental Group on 22 March developed and finalized an agreed list of tasks. For example, the State Department would take care of recognition, etc. This paper served the useful purpose of coordinating our planning.

66. On 28 March the JCS approved letters of instructions to Cinclant and Conant and we implemented the plan to improve the Miami defenses. We tested the plan and had planes, etc., to move in to protect the Miami area. Naval support was carried out by the Carrier ESSEX and 7 destroyers. Destroyers escorted the invading ships - close at night but at a distance during the day. Gen. Taylor asked if they were authorized to engage. They were authorized to engage if attacked but under these circumstances the whole force was to have been diverted - since we were protecting shipping and not assisting an invasion. The rules of engagement changed several times as the operation proceeded. Our job was mostly one of support during two phases:

Covert support - D-Day to D-minus 3

Logistic support - during build up phase

67. CIA was in a position to double and quadruple the force. We planned logistic supply as part of this build up. If things went well they might have built up in the Cienfuegos area in D plus 30. We provided arms packs for 30,000 men in addition to CIA planning for 5,000 packs. Packs for 15,000 men were actually loaded on ships and headed for the area. Also recoilless rifles, mortars, jeeps, trucks, etc. We were also providing for the overt

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phase under several conditions. For example, if the U.S. recognized this force (one of the Council members, Capt. Arttime, went in with the brigade). State was planning on recognizing the government but no State or diplomatic representative would have been sent in until Havana was taken. We also considered possibility of supporting the force in the event a third country recognized them before we did. In addition we had one Marine hospital to move to Viequez.

68. Gen. Taylor asked about the evacuation plan and Gen. Taylor said it was planned to employ the LCI's and planes from the air strip. Gen. Gray said a separate war room was set up in the JCS - the regular war room was cut out. Only a limited number were cut in - this list included Adm. Dennison. Col. Mallard of the Agency was on the ESSEX. It was a cumbersome type of organization but it worked. There was good commo. There was good liaison. Decisions were implemented quickly.

69. Admiral Burke stated that the trouble was the delays - commo from there to Washington and back was fairly good - but there were always delays - sometimes of several hours - what was needed was a commander on the spot to make decisions. Another thing - although the commo was good from CEF (?) to Washington - there was not enough between the Naval forces and the ships - took a couple of days to find out that two ships were one and the same - that different names were being used for the same ship.

70. Gen. Gray said that there should have been an Inter-Departmental group working on the concept and keeping the President informed in writing. This would have eliminated the fact that up to the last date there was not a meeting of minds. It was not clear whether there was going to be an air strike or not. Mr. Barnes said it could not have been achieved the way it went along - after the Trinidad plan was scrapped we were forced to come up with new concepts and new approaches to meet objections which were being raised.

71. Admiral Burke said that politically it could not have been done. We made our mistake in not drawing up what we thought the concept was and presenting it to the State Department and CIA. We did not grab it hard enough - partly because we were holding it so tight - therefore Gen. Gray's group couldn't get advice from the people who could have given it - because they weren't cut in. If he had been working under an agreed concept it could have been done better.

72. Mr. Bissell said that what he had read from the April 12 paper came near to this. Many of the suggested acts that came up involved political policy decisions of great import and these had been made in advance. Example, question whether Navy Jets in the air would give protection to B-26's giving close ground support. Decision was made that support should be given - this required high level policy and was a reversal of policy re engagement of U.S. forces. We could have had a concept of use of U.S. forces. Gen. Taylor said: You talk of concepts but the concepts didn't change.

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Admiral Burke stated we would have task for example to cover by Naval air - this came very late so that by the time we were supposed to execute this we were at some distance from the area. Gen. Gray said that if we had had an agreed national plan we would have had to face up to the decisions which we got piecemeal - re rules of engagement. It should have been in an overall plan.

73. Gen. Taylor asked how can we do better - about the political restraints - how can we do this. Gen. Gray replied: by putting the political factors into the plan at the beginning. Admiral Burke commented that the President must have been confused by the many different people who were advising him. Gen. Gray said that once we got State in on agreed plans, Mr. Braddock came up with the answers. We should get State into the plan at the outset.

74. Gen. Taylor remarked that after the rejection of the Trinidad Plan we were racing against the clock. Gen. Gray said that he had wanted to war game the plan and that that is what should have been done. Gen. Taylor then asked what were the factors that necessitated speed. Gen. Gray said the rainy season was approaching and this would affect not only ground fighting but flying conditions. There was the problem of the Jets which Castro was supposed to be receiving soon. Info that some Jet trainees had returned from Czechoslovakia. Col. Hawkins said there were other factors: We were holding 1400 men in impossible conditions. The President of Guatemala was pushing us. Also American newsmen were after the story and some of the troops and airmen were threatening to desert.

75. INTERROGATION OF MR. HAYDEN. At this juncture Mr. Hayden, a member of the Alabama National Air Guard and a contract flyer who participated in the project, was received by the Committee. Mr. Hayden said that he had drawn up a small resume and that if the committee was agreeable he would half-read and half-comment on that resume. (Presumably the resume will become a part of the record.) Consequently only the questioning will be recorded here. (TAB-C)

76. Col. Hawkins asked Mr. Hayden what happened to the original plan for D-Day. He replied that he was exposed to the targets. He thought the people were familiar with the original plan. It changed 180°. We were to use maximum effort against air fields, microwave stations, (forcing use of radio voice) - we hoped this chaos - plus propaganda would do the job. Col. Hawkins asked what were the orders. Hayden replied that they were ordered to use two aircraft on each target except that only one would be used on air base near Guantanamo. Request was granted late for use of other aircraft. We were pushed for briefing of crews - we didn't have time for target study - the whole situation was cramped. After D-Day it was obvious that not all enemy aircraft was destroyed - we thought we knew how many he had but he was turning them around quickly - our turn around time was 7 hours round trip with 30 minutes over the target.

77. Mr. Kennedy asked if these pilots were Americans or Cubans and Mr. Hayden replied they were both Americans and Cubans. They got along well together and both were motivated by patriotic reasons.

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78. Hayden said that the first attack (D minus 2) only served to make Castro mad and gave him time to re-group his forces. Some of the flyers saw Navy protection - others did no. At Puerto Cabezas there was uncertainty as to whether they were enemy or friendly. Admiral Burke stated that on D-1 and D plus 1 the Navy fliers were over and that on D plus 2 authority was given for one hour of coverage. Mr. Hayden was asked if MIGS were involved. He said that as much as he would like to he can't say that MIGS were involved. He said he did not believe they were. He said he debriefed B-26 and other pilots and they saw none. The reports of Navy intervention may have helped in air battles but as far as Cuban personnel were concerned they took it for granted that they had Navy cover.

79. Mr. Kennedy asked if the pilots expected they would have help or assistance. Were they ever told they would not have assistance? Mr. Hayden replied that they were not told that they would not have assistance and he did not think they expected military assistance. Mr. Bissell said that on D plus 2 they were briefed to expect Navy cover and protection and beginning at that time they may have expected assistance. Mr. Hayden said the news was a great morale booster to people in the Puerto Cabezas area and when it did not materialize morale was affected adversely. Cuban crews aborted and without this assurance of assistance American pilots would not have participated.

80. Gen. Taylor asked what targets they found on the beach. Mr. Hayden replied that on D plus 1 they caught a large column of trucks. An American pilot "bounced" those trucks and from 15 to 20 Russian tanks - three B-26's made passes at the trucks and hurt them badly. This was Tuesday afternoon about 1800 hours local time. Col. Hawkins remarked that Comint indicated they suffered 1800 casualties. Mr. Kennedy asked if Mr. Hayden was able to tell where the fighting was taking place. He was unable to give a conclusive answer but thought the forces had moved up from Blue and Red beaches but never very far out. He remarked that the enemy had lots of anti-aircraft fire. Mr. Kennedy asked if they had this on D-Day. Col. Hawkins said that they did not but that they moved it in very fast. Gen. Taylor asked where were they reporting flack and Mr. Hayden replied: from all over - and with excellent marksmanship. Gen. Taylor asked how the air-ground commo worked and Mr. Hayden said the Commo gear went down with the ship that was sunk and that there was no commo.

81. Mr. Kennedy asked if the Cuban pilots did well. Mr. Hayden said they constantly found excuses for not flying. Gen. Taylor asked what percentage failed and Mr. Hayden replied that only 35% were "ready to go" and you could count the number of "tigers" on one hand. Col. Beerli took exception to this saying that on D minus 2 we had eight aircraft up and that these made more than one pass over the target. Mr. Hayden observed that at that time the sight of victory was present - but when they got thinking that they were losing it was different. He said that on the morning of D minus 2 he had to beg them to go. He observed that they were good until things started going wrong.

82. Mr. Kennedy asked where was the fighting going on at D plus 1 and D plus 2. Admiral Burke said that on D plus 2 Navy recon could find no

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infantry - they were all apparently in the bush. Mr. Hayden said he had no information as to where the fighting was.

83. Mr. Kennedy asked if the Castro forces had come down the road on D plus 1 and Gen. Taylor remarked that he did not see how they could have gotten down there that fast even if they knew where the landing was coming. Col. Hawkins said there were tanks in the Red Beach area on D-Day. Mr. Hayden expressed the personal opinion that there was not much fighting done. Gen. Taylor asked if there was any prearranged plan for use of smoke to identify our own people on the ground and Mr. Hayden said that the air force was concerned exclusively with taking care of the "heavy stuff" and not attacking troops. Mr. Kennedy asked how long the party lasted on Red Beach and Mr. Hayden thought it wasn't more than a matter of hours.

84. Mr. Dulles raised the question of the confusion in orders of going after the air fields on D plus 1. Mr. Bissell said that at some point on D-Day we received permission to strike the airfields that night - and then there was some talk of a strike at dusk - but ultimately it was authorized for that night but bad visibility and other factors prevented them carrying it out. Col. Beerli asked Mr. Hayden if there was a lack of aircraft and Mr. Hayden replied that they were limited to the number of shells on any given target - we were limited to number of aircraft we could use. When we called it off we thought we were losing the war intentionally. This thought was based on the restrictions which had been placed on us.

85. The meeting terminated at approximately 1700 hours.

Distribution:

Original - Copy #1 - General Maxwell D. Taylor
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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

OF THE

TAYLOR COMMITTEE

AT THE

CONFERENCE ROOM (ROOM 214)

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

AT 1350 HOURS

24 APRIL 1961

NSA HAS NO OBJECTION TO THE
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OF THIS DOCUMENT
See Schuyler 12/1/00

PRESENT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

GENERAL MAXWELL D. TAYLOR

MR. ROBERT KENNEDY
Attorney General

ADMIRAL ARLEIGH A. BURKE
Chief of Naval Operations

COLONEL MICHAEL J. INGELIDO
Deputy Secretary, JCS

MAJOR GENERAL DAVID W. GRAY
Joint Staff

MR. ALLEN DULLES

GENERAL C. B. CABELL

MR. RICHARD M. BISSELL

COLONEL J. C. KING

MR. JACOB D. EASTERLINE

COLONEL STANLEY W. BEERLI

MR. TRACY BARNES

COLONEL JACK HAWKINS

MR. HAYDEN

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(The following notations are verbalized, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

COLONEL HAWKINS - I made a misstatement in regard to the decision not to employ napalm. This was not a national, high-level governmental decision, but the agency made this decision as they thought that the use of napalm would cause concern and public outcry.

GENERAL CABELL - Yes, that was in regard to its use in the Havana area in advance of the operation. However, it was authorized for use on the beachhead.

COLONEL HAWKINS - Another advantage to the Escambray area is that Castro never used his offensive aircraft against the guerrillas there and, additionally, tanks and artillery cannot be used in that terrain.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Would you summarize all the restraints and restrictions that were put on your operations by policy decisions and considerations?

COLONEL HAWKINS - In regard to the Zapata Plan there is the question of the naval LSD which had aboard it LCUs and LCPs. These landing craft were to haul troops, tanks and trucks and they were to be put ashore by Cuban crews. Because they did not wish to have the Cuban crews riding aboard the Navy's ship we had to run a rigmarole wherein the LSD rendezvoused with the Cuban Expeditionary Force ships and the Cuban crews went aboard the landing craft after they left the LSD.

MR. BISSELL - Though it was a sizable operation, as far as we know there were no rumors of the ships having left the port of embarkation, there was no outcry made in the press, and we have no indications that the point of landing was known.

GENERAL GRAY - We did receive a report of one airline sighting wherein their aircraft flew over the ships.

COLONEL HAWKINS - Bissell's suggestion in regard to having the ships fan out and then reconverge at a point of rendezvous worked very well.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Then the only Americans present were in the LSD?

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COLONEL HAWKINS - That's not quite right. There were also two Navy destroyers in the vicinity.

ADMIRAL BURKE - Yes, they came in to about 20 miles from the Coast.

(At this point Colonel Hawkins, employing a map of the area, gave a resume of the landing operations which were planned for Red, Blue and Green Beaches. This was extracted from the actual operational plan, or the Zapata Plan, a copy of which will be made available for the files. He also gave a resume of the paratroop operations, detailing the drops which were made in the vicinity of Red, Blue and Green Beaches.)

GENERAL TAYLOR - Were these night drops?

COLONEL HAWKINS - No, they were supposed to be made at dawn. However, they did not drop until 0730 hours. We are not sure as to just what happened as we have never heard from them.

MR. KENNEDY - How far away from the beachheads were these drops?

COLONEL HAWKINS (Pointing to map) - Drops were made to several points up to about 16 miles above the coast. (Colonel Hawkins then gave a short resume of the air support plan for the landings beginning with the air strikes at D-2 and he also gave the details of a diversionary landing to be made east of Guantanamo in Oriente Province.) - We had a team of 10 men equipped with radio who were supposed to go to this beach, mark it, and help bring the landing party ashore. As it turned out, the team leader, in conducting instructions of his group in the use of hand grenades, had an accident in which the grenade went off and blew up the detail.

MR. BISSELL - This was a diversionary landing which was supposed to be carried out at D-2. The accident took place on D-6.

GENERAL TAYLOR - What objective was this diversionary landing supposed to have?

COLONEL HAWKINS - It was supposed to attract attention and help divert the Cuban forces away from the main landings.

GENERAL TAYLOR - How many men do the Cubans have in this area?

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COLONEL HAWKINS - About 90,000 militia men in this province. This diversionary landing had another purpose also in that they were supposed to organize and set up guerrilla forces.

MR. KENNEDY - What happened to this force?

COLONEL HAWKINS - They didn't land. I think the leader lost his nerve as they approached the beach and then withdrew, using rubber boats.

COLONEL KING - We think they're on their way to Vieques now.

ADMIRAL BURKE - They said they were going to Key West but we intercepted the ship, the PERKA, and are taking the people to Vieques.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Is that all the people who are at Vieques?

MR. BISSELL - No, there are also some 300 men who had been in training.

MR. KENNEDY - Isn't there anyone at Vieques now who had been in the fighting?

GENERAL GRAY - I believe the landing craft crews are there.

MR. HAWKINS - We felt that on D-Day morning we should strike not only the three main Cuban airfields, where we knew aircraft were located, but additionally, should hit all of the Cuban airfields. The two aircraft were also going to hit tanks located in Managua, and on this mission I wanted napalm employed. They were then supposed to come back and land at the field near the beachhead where the avgas refueling truck should have been located. All this, of course, is predicated on our knocking out the Cuban Air Force.

GENERAL TAYLOR - How much did they actually get ashore in the way of supplies?

COLONEL HAWKINS - They only got what was on the LCU, plus what was personally carried by the troops going ashore. This turned out to be less than enough for even one day's combat. This ship that was carrying the bulk of the heavy equipment was hit by rocket fire from a Seafury and sunk. I want to emphasize that this plan was based on two assumptions: first, that we would have absolute control of the air on D-Day; and second, that Castro's

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fighting forces would be about as efficient as they were in their Escambray operations. As it turned out, we were wrong on both assumptions. He had well-coordinated fighting troops and he also demonstrated that he had well-trained and aggressive pilots.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Were you supposed to control this beachhead area indefinitely?

COLONEL HAWKINS - No, we had trucks coming in on D-Day and others which were supposed to come in on D+2. These vehicles were to be loaded with the supplies which were being off-loaded, and then the force was going to make a try for a break-out. The Cuban reaction would be checked closely, as we thought that perhaps the militia might refuse to fight; and if so, the landing force, on breaking out from the beachhead would head for Havana. If Castro's forces did fight and the expeditionary force found itself hard-put to cope with them, they were then to try to break out and head for the Escambray.

GENERAL TAYLOR - How many men did you have to do this?

COLONEL HAWKINS - About 650 men were supposed to land in the Blue Beach area, plus the paratroopers dropping in that vicinity, and we were eventually to have about 400 men at Green Beach.

MR. BISSELL - However the initial landing at Green Beach was about 200 men.

COLONEL HAWKINS - We were supposed to have about 1400 men total in the three beach areas.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Do you suppose any of them were able to make their way out of there? Can they get around on foot in this swampy terrain?

GENERAL GRAY - That would depend on the state of the rainy season. At its height, they would have up to two feet of water in this area. However, this was just about the beginning of the rainy season, and it should not have been too bad.

COLONEL HAWKINS - We think that some of our men did get out on foot. As you recall, we also dropped some paratroopers above the swampy terrain. As a final point, Castro has only reported the capture of 400 to 500 men and we got over 1300 men into that area.

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MR. BISSELL - You have now been told of these plans, as plans, and I think this would be an appropriate time to have General Gray give you the JCS's view or evaluation of these plans.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Why did we think that this operation would be a "less spectacular landing"?

MR. BISSELL - It was carried out at night, in a very remote area, and we had hoped that the landing might be unopposed. We had had no reports of either police or militia in these beach areas. Finally, we thought that if this force were to land without a big show, the operation could then take on the guise of a rebel infiltration.

GENERAL GRAY - We developed a covert logistics plan for follow-up operations, basing it on the assumption of the most optimistic thing that could happen, as our thought was that if events did not turn out that well, and we had less troops to support it would be that much easier logistically. Besides this logistic support of covert operations, we also developed a logistics support for the transition to overt operations. I have a chart to indicate the key meetings involved in the DOD participation in this operation.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Yes, it's very good. Colonel King, I hope that CIA can work up something of this sort, using this format.

GENERAL GRAY - I'd like to outline this in four phases. First, pre-JCS participation, that is, up to the 13th of January 61. Secondly, the planning and evaluation phase, 13 January to 22 March. Third, the pre-operational phase from 22 March to 13 April. Fourth, the operational phase from 13 April on. During this first phase in December, President Eisenhower had designated Ambassador Willauer to be the over-all coordinator in regard to all actions relating to Cuba. At the first meeting I attended, which was called by him, he was thinking in broader terms than the operations we have been talking about today. For example, he spoke of getting 5 to 10,000 people from various Latin American countries to engage in training in the United States.

(At 1427 hours, the meeting was interrupted while General Taylor

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called McGeorge Bundy at the White House in regard to the possibility of General Taylor going to Vieques Island. The meeting resumed.)

MR. BARNES - There is a document which spells out Ambassador Willauer's participation in this Cuba Project, and the objectives which were given to him. I might add that the White House and other departments were looking to him to expedite any planning which seemed to be falling behind.

GENERAL GRAY - At this first meeting I referred to previously, General Bonesteel and I suggested that the 5412 Group review all the bidding and that a coordinated Department of State, Department of Defense, and CIA working group be set up. Ambassador Willauer then asked us to set up all possible courses of action, and there was some talk of a large volunteer force which then evolved into overt intervention. We prepared such a paper for this working group, and it was approved for submission by General Wheeler and General Lemnitzer. In this paper, we said that the only type of operation which could assure complete success would be one which involved overt U.S. intervention. At this time in the JCS, it was felt strongly that what we needed was a national plan which had Presidential approval, and which delineated the tasks to be done by each governmental department. We prepared a paper on this proposition, and it was approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and sent by them to the Secretary of Defense. Because of the fact that this was in the change-over period between administrations, as far as I know, nothing happened to that paper. I think that this is an important fact, as we must face up to the realization that in the last stage of this Cuban Operation, there was confusion as to what the actual concept was. If a complete national plan had been prepared and approved, this might not have occurred. Unfortunately, we were never able to get this done. Later, Mr. Mann of the State Department read this paper and stated that this is what we should have done.

ADMIRAL BURKE - This was the idea of a complete interdepartmental task force.

MR. BARNES - Something like this was done later.

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GENERAL GRAY - What actually happened then was that CIA wrote up all the concepts, we in the JCS got them on an evaluation basis, and the State Department got into the act very informally still later.

GENERAL TAYLOR - The Zapata Plan was apparently put on paper and approved sometime after the 15 March meeting. Was a field order ever put out on it?

COLONEL HAWKINS - This was a rush order after several alternatives had been discussed. I don't know if the JCS ever got a detailed plan, as we worked and reworked this until just before the operation.

GENERAL TAYLOR - As I understand it then, the concept was okayed by the President, and the detailed plan was worked over for a period of time and finished just before the operation. When was the plan for the landing approved?

MR. BISSELL - The President approved successive steps as we prepared for this, but up until D-1, he reserved unto himself the final decision to go or no go, and up until this time, D-1, he could have diverted the expeditionary force from landing, even though it was on its way.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Was there ever an affirming order given to go ahead?

ADMIRAL BURKE - My records show that 1340 hours on the 16th of April was the time that we received the green light.

GENERAL TAYLOR - This was just before the landings which were to take place the next day.

GENERAL GRAY - The first time the new administration came into this was at a 27 January meeting at the White House.

MR. KENNEDY - I attended that meeting, and there was never any discussion of that plan. I do remember that Secretary Rusk brought up the fact of a possible landing on the Isle of Pines.

GENERAL GRAY - That's right. They merely discussed the seven possible courses of action, ranging from straight volunteer forces to straight U.S. overt intervention. We were told to prepare plans for all of these possible courses of action in ascending scale of difficulty.

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MR. KENNEDY - One thing sticks in my mind in regard to this meeting. I remember that at that time, we were told that it would be impossible to successfully overthrow Castro because of his control over his armed forces and over the country in general, unless you had the invading force backed up by intervention by U.S. forces.

(At this point, 1440 hours, General Taylor was called to the telephone where he talked to McGeorge Bundy at the White House, who informed him that he had not, as yet, seen the President.)

GENERAL GRAY - At this time, we prepared a plan for the Joint Chiefs of Staff which was approved by them and sent to the Secretary of Defense, stating that the U.S. needed an over-all national plan of action and the paper then listed all possible seven courses of action.

GENERAL TAYLOR - The Trinidad Plan and the Zapata Plan had not as yet been crystallized then.

GENERAL GRAY - Not as far as we knew.

GENERAL TAYLOR - As I understand, this need for a national plan of action which you were bringing up, what you are really doing is raising a procedural point.

GENERAL GRAY - On the 27th of January, the President was briefed on the Trinidad Plan, and he was also told that the JCS had not reviewed it, and he directed that they so do.

MR. KENNEDY - That 27 January briefing did not address an operational plan, as such. It was very ethereal.

GENERAL GRAY - I do know that on the 28th of January, we were asked to review the Trinidad Plan.

MR. BISSELL - My notes from that meeting indicate that we asked for authority to continue the build-up of a strike force and that we also go ahead with political and propaganda actions that were underway. We did not mention geography, but my notes do state that Colonel Hawkins' detail plan would be evaluated by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

GENERAL TAYLOR - That does seem to agree then.

GENERAL GRAY - We were given the Trinidad Plan on the 31st of January and we briefed the Chiefs on the 3rd of February. I would like to read the conclusions which were approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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(At this point, General Gray read from JCSM-57-61, dated 3 February 61, and its attachment which was a military evaluation of the CIA Paramilitary Plan - Cuba. A copy of this document will be made available in the file. General Gray read all seventeen conclusions made by the JCS and several of his conclusions were interrupted by comments and questions. Following his statement of conclusion No. 6, that the airborne assault should be successful, inasmuch as it was highly improbable that it would be opposed, General Taylor stated:) -

GENERAL TAYLOR - I'm surprised to hear that. I wouldn't have bet a nickel that it would work.

GENERAL GRAY - Don't forget that this is the Trinidad Plan and not the Zapata Plan.

(Later, in referring to Conclusion No. 11, that it would take the Cuban Army until D+2 to move substantial forces to the beachhead area, even without interference from the air or from guerrillas, General Gray stated:) -

GENERAL GRAY - The intelligence that was given to us indicated that the nearest Castro military unit was a regiment situated about 100 miles away, and we were also told that the regiment was not concentrated at Santa Clara, but it was scattered throughout the area with the militia. Another thing that had not been developed by CIA, we did not know of the political pressure and advance publicity that would be needed in order to successfully surface this revolutionary government.

GENERAL TAYLOR - I don't understand your reference to advance publicity that was needed.

GENERAL GRAY - It was necessary in order to build up public acceptance of the provisional government and its leaders.

MR. EASTERLINE - This was done out of Miami and New York and we had a terrible time with it.

COLONEL KING - The first knowledge that the Cubans had of the actual operation was on the night of 14 April, just before the D-2 air strikes, when Barnes and I talked to Cardona. I told him that every time I had given him council information, there had been a leak; and I pointed out that inasmuch as his own sex was going in there, he should keep quiet. He said that he would not tell anyone.

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GENERAL TAYLOR - I guess that all this hoopla in the press made this operation just that much harder.

GENERAL GRAY - Yes, though this is not an excuse. I don't think it had any effect on the actual military operation.

MR. BARNES - None of us anticipated the reaction by the press, particularly by that Miami press during the period when the U.N. was hearing Roa's complaints. All sorts of guesses were printed, including one which had the right date for the operation. Notwithstanding, we did move our people from our training area to the port, and onto the ships without the dope getting out.

GENERAL GRAY - ^{Samra} Simoza put a very effective clamp on in Nicaragua. (At this point, after reading through the thirteenth conclusion that the Cuban Army could eventually reduce the beachhead, General Gray stated:) - In our view we thought that the invasion forces could hold the beachhead about seven days. (On reading the fifteenth conclusion that a decision of the execution of this operation must be made by D-21, General Gray stated:) - This decision was made at that time, but the President reserved the right to stop the operation at every meeting which was held up to the day before the actual landing. (General Gray then read from the sixteenth conclusion in regard to the fact that ultimate success would depend on political factors, that is a sizable popular uprising or substantial follow-on forces.)

GENERAL TAYLOR - I don't quite see what you mean by follow-on forces and your follow-on support. The time capability which we give for these forces to hold the beachhead for a period of only seven days would not allow for this.

GENERAL GRAY - That's right. This should have been planned for. It was just about this time that Mr. Beerli began to sound out the other Latin American governments in regard to their support of this operation.

MR. EASTERLINE - We also had an additional 300 people in the Miami area who were to be flown into Nicaragua and embarked.

COLONEL HAWKINS - Yes, we actually flew about 162 of these out of Miami.

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GENERAL CABELL - We committed some of these people in advance rather than deliberately holding them off in order to have a follow-on force in training.

GENERAL GRAY - The militia in this area of the island were reported to be friendly to the guerrillas. Therefore, we figured that Castro would have to go clear back to the west end of the island in order to get any effective militia to send against the invading forces.

(General Gray then read the last conclusion which stated that despite the shortcomings, the Joint Chiefs of Staff considered that timely execution of the plan had a fair chance of ultimate success and even if it did not achieve immediately the full results desired, it could contribute to the eventual overthrow of the Castro Regime.)

GENERAL TAYLOR - This was the JCS evaluation of the Trinidad Plan.

GENERAL GRAY - Yes Sir.

MR. KENNEDY - Did I understand you to say earlier that your answer as to the possible degree of success of this plan was 30/70?

GENERAL GRAY - Yes Sir. This was a general numerical guess made in a discussion with General Wheeler. I heard others saying that the chances might be 40 to 60, which is the highest guess that I heard. I might point out that at about the time of this evaluation paper, Ambassador Willauer faded out of the picture and we began to have meetings with Mr. Beerli's group.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Did they get into the military aspects of this?

GENERAL GRAY - No. Mostly the political aspects.

COLONEL KING - One briefing on the Trinidad Plan was given to the Beerli group about the second week of February.

GENERAL GRAY - About the 24th of February the Joint Staff Team went to Guatemala to evaluate the military effectiveness of the CIA-Cuban Volunteer Task Force.

(At this point, General Gray read from JCSM-146-61, dated 10 March 1961, a memorandum for the Secretary of Defense by the Joint Chiefs

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of Staff in regard to the evaluation of the CIA-Cuban volunteer task force. This document with attachment will be made available in the file. After reading some of the more specific conclusions in the evaluation, General Gray concluded by stating the general JCS conclusion that from a military standpoint, since this small invasion force will retain the initiative until location of the landing is determined, the plan could be expected to achieve initial success. Ultimate success, however will depend on the extent to which the initial assault serves catalyst for further action on the part of anti-Castro elements throughout Cuba.)

GENERAL TAYLOR - This was the Joint Military Team's evaluation of this Cuban force.

GENERAL GRAY - Yes. The team went down there to check the training, the combat effectiveness, and the logistics capabilities of this volunteer force, and they were favorably impressed. Colonel Tarwater, for example, felt that the pilots were very well trained, though he said that they should practice making successive passes on ground targets. Now to move along to the Zapata Plan. At the 11 March meeting, the President asked for a plan to be prepared which would be less spectacular in execution, and therefore more plausible as an essentially Cuban operation. CIA made up several alternative courses of action, which we heard of on the 13th of March. My staff evaluated it and the JCS reviewed it on the 15th of March and submitted their conclusions to the Secretary of Defense. On the 16th of March, these conclusions were presented to the President.

MR. BISSELL - Do you want to mention the alternative concepts, one of which was the Zapata Concept?

GENERAL GRAY - I believe that only three of the seven alternatives were deemed worthy of serious consideration. Some of the other alternatives, for example, dealt with landings on islands near the Isle of Pines.

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MR. DULLES - It was felt that such landings would have little impact on the main island of Cuba, as any rebel sympathizers who wanted to join up could not do so unless they swam out to the island.

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ADMIRAL BURKE - The three alternatives we considered were: first, a modification of the Trinidad Plan; second, a landing at Preston on the northeast coast; and third, the Zapata Plan.

GENERAL GRAY - The JCS conclusions stated that the Zapata Plan was the most feasible of the three alternatives and the one most likely to accomplish the objective. However, it was also stated that none of the alternative concepts were considered to be as militarily feasible and as likely to accomplish the objective as the original plan, that is, the Trinidad Plan. We thought that with effective air strikes laid on prior to the landing, and with tactical air support available during and after the landing in order to keep the area secure, it would be possible to keep the Cuban forces from getting into the beachhead area. As you will note from my chart, once this evaluation of the alternative concepts was made, the Joint Chiefs of Staff started to get into the operational business, that is of support and logistics.

GENERAL TAYLOR - You say that the evaluation was approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

GENERAL GRAY - Yes Sir.

(At this point, General Gray was reading from the conclusions in JCSM-166-61, dated 15 March, a memorandum from the JCS to the Secretary of Defense, subject: "Evaluation of the Military Aspects of Alternate Concepts, CIA Para-Military Plan - Cuba". A copy of this document with the Appendices will be made available through the file.)

GENERAL TAYLOR - You say that the Joint Chiefs felt that this plan was not as feasible as the original plan?

MR. KENNEDY - Is that question accurate? Wouldn't it be right to say that the Joint Chiefs of Staff approved this concept?

ADMIRAL BURKE - There is no paper which says that. However, inasmuch as the JCS did not disapprove this concept, it does imply approval, even though there were many factors and reservations that were taken into account.

MR. BISSELL - I have some notes here which were written by Colonel Hawkins about the 16th of March, which compares the advantages

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and disadvantages of the two plans. His final phrase is, "The Trinidad Plan promises more decisive results but at greater risks." One might say that the Zapata Plan had lesser initial risks but it could be expected to achieve less decisive results. This was because you would expect less opposition to the landing force in this area, and because the approaches to the beachhead area were not as good. At the same time, night landings here would register less of a shock on the Cuban populace, and it would be more difficult for the guerrillas and volunteer recruits from the general public to get into the beachhead area to join up with the landing force.

GENERAL TAYLOR - At no point then, were the JCS asked, "Do you recommend doing it?" I understand now that they only were asked to comment in regard to the several alternative courses.

ADMIRAL BURKE - That is true. However, where we possibly did make a mistake, is in the fact that we did have an opportunity to say that we thought this plan was not feasible and we did not say so.

GENERAL GRAY - The conclusions stated that we did think the concept or plan was feasible.

ADMIRAL BURKE - That's true, even though we did have reservations.

GENERAL TAYLOR - No one ever said flat out to you, "Do you recommend doing it, and if not, do you have a better plan?"

MR. DULLES - These plans were exposed and discussed in high-level meetings, and this question was asked.

ADMIRAL BURKE - One difficulty here was that General Lemnitzer was by himself at these meetings.

GENERAL GRAY - I was with him at several of these meetings.

MR. DULLES - One thing we mustn't forget is that we were all interested in having this plan turn out to be a success. Not enough emphasis has been placed here on the alternatives that faced us. We either had to go ahead or we had the alternative of denopolizing these people, and to the world, it would have meant that we were not behind these people who were trying to overthrow Castro.

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ADMIRAL BURKE - Also, just at this juncture, we were in between administrations, and no one was too sure of his ground. In retrospect, we should have formalized this thing earlier and in detail. We should have had more work done on the plan, and it should have been worked over carefully and scrupulously as is usually done. This we did not do, both because of the time factor and because it was so closely held.

GENERAL TAYLOR - All of these plans seem to contain the critical assumption that there would be an uprising by the Cuban populace. Was this ever discussed?

ADMIRAL BURKE - We did discuss it in the JCS.

MR. DULLES - We didn't count on this so much in the Zapata Plan; whereas the Trinidad Plan was more of a shock treatment which might have brought the Cuban people around to our side. The later plan was not tailored to this, and it was far quieter. Perhaps Castro might have played down the landing instead of blowing it up. As a matter of fact, he only blew it up when it was rather evident that he had licked the invading force.

MR. KENNEDY - Then what was the objective of the operation?

MR. DULLES - Get a beachhead, hold it, and then build it up.

MR. KENNEDY - How could you possibly do that - take a thousand or fourteen hundred men in there and hold the beachhead against these thousands of militia? (At this point he addressed Admiral Burke.) When you thought that this was a satisfactory plan, did you understand that these fourteen hundred men could maintain their position there several weeks, even though there wouldn't be an uprising?

ADMIRAL BURKE - No. I understood that there would be one of two choices. First, if there was no serious opposition, the landing force might hold the beachhead. Secondly, if there were opposition and they could not hold it, they would slip through and become guerrillas.

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COLONEL HAWKINS - We had a call from our agents saying that if we would give them arms, they would go with us, otherwise they were being called up to the Cuban militia and would have to go.

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up, and on the 22nd of March we finalized an agreed list of tasks. For example, the State Department had to define what recognition of the provisional government meant. This delineation of agreed tasks was useful and helped much. On the 28th of March, the JCS approved a letter of instruction to CINCLANT and CINCONAD; and CONAD's plan, "Southern Tip", was implemented to improve the air defense of our southern-states area. We also had to work out rules of engagement for our naval forces as the carrier, Essex, and seven destroyers provided escort for the Cuban expeditionary force ships.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Did they have authority to attack Cuban forces?

GENERAL GRAY - They could attack Cuban aircraft if they had open bomb bays or they were actually starting an attack. However, if such an engagement did take place, we were then supposed to divert this force to Vieques Island, although some people thought that the Cubans would not divert, but would insist on going in for the landings. I might add that the rules of engagement were changed several times as the operation proceeded. On the 12th of April, the "Southern Tip" Plan was implemented and we were in an operational status. We also developed two logistic support plans, one overt and one covert. The covert had several phases. First the landing phase, D to D+3. Secondly, the buildup phase, D+3 to D+30. During this phase, the CIA had their plan built up to quadruple the size of their force to about 5,000 men and we had to estimate the numbers of weapons carriers, jeeps and other equipment that would be necessary. Thirdly, we had the D+30 and ON Phase, where we assumed that these forces would have popular support, and we could gradually go to overt logistic support of the operation. We had arms packs for 30,000 guerrillas in addition to CIA plans for a 5,000-man force. This equipment was actually assembled at Anniston, readily available and packs for 15,000 actually were loaded on ship. We also had mobile equipment which was being assembled at Anniston. We also considered the possibility of another Latin American country recognizing the provisional government before us did, and if we would then covertly support these forces through this third

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government. Beyond that, we had an overt phase, wherein the provisional government was recognized after its people had gone into Cuba. Here a military logistic advisory group would assist the volunteer Cuban forces in providing sustained logistic support, and then following the stabilization of the new government with diplomatic representatives re-entering Cuba, it envisaged the establishment of a military aid program through DOD. I have omitted mention of the fact that we had a U.S. Army field-type hospital set up and ready to go to Vieques.

GENERAL TAYLOR - How did you figure on evacuating casualties?

GENERAL GRAY - We could get them out by air.

MR. BISSELL - We thought that we could do this after H⁴.

GENERAL GRAY - We also had a War Room set up in the Joint Staff area with all messages exclusive from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Admiral Dennison and the task force commander, or from them to me. Though the messages from Washington had to be relayed to the Cuban expeditionary forces' shore through these channels and it was cumbersome, I don't think that you could say the operation failed because of organization.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Don't you think that withholding all this from the staff was an impediment?

GENERAL GRAY - I don't think so, but it took a lot of the time of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

ADMIRAL BURKE - There are always a lot of delays involving anything from a half hour, to one to three hours; and these delays, mostly due to communications, could be fatal. If we had had a naval commander of the task force there, he could have made instantaneous decisions. I found myself writing a message to my naval task group commander, telling him what to do if he was under fire from the beach. What in the hell was I doing writing this in Washington?

GENERAL GRAY - I don't say that this was the way to do it, but I don't think that you could say that faulty organization defeated the operation.

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ADMIRAL BURKE - I agree with that.

GENERAL GRAY - If we had had an interdepartmental setup, charged with the responsibility of coming up with a concept and with an over-all national plan, and then had presented it in writing each time to the President, I think there would have been less confusion as to just what was approved at the end of this operation.

MR. BARNES - That couldn't have been achieved because of the way this operation developed. Though we had a fairly definitive plan in Trinidad, after that we just couldn't do it as we kept changing our plan because of political considerations and changes in the ground rules.

ADMIRAL BURKE - That's where we made a mistake I think. We should have drawn up a paper stating our concept, our mission, our tasks, our requirements, the status of the plan, etc. The way this developed, General Gray had to come to me with all sorts of questions. For example, what we could use the carriers for? Whereas if we were working under an agreed concept, he would not have had to do so.

MR. BISSELL - Many actions that came up involved the political considerations of importance. For example, at one time in the operation, a decision was made to authorize Navy jets to give protection to our B-26s when they came in to give close ground support, at least for a limited period of time. This involved a high-level decision and also amounted to a reversal of the policy that had been made that no U.S. forces would be overtly engaged. It's hard for me to see how this could have been worked out in advance.

GENERAL TAYLOR - It depends on what you mean by the use of the word "concept". I don't think that any changes were actually made in the concept.

ADMIRAL BURKE - That task which Bissell just discussed was laid on after we were told that the carriers would get out of there so that Castro's air force wouldn't use them. Later when the decision was made to launch aircraft for beachhead cover, it was pretty late.

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Eventually, he said we wound up with split forces, trying to cover both the beachhead and enemy airfields. Hayden stated that the plan as he knew it, had been changed a 180 degrees, in that they were originally supposed to use 100 per cent of their operational capability for strikes at the enemy airfields in an effort to neutralize Castro's air force, and also to hit his microwave communications.)

COLONEL HAWKINS - What were your orders on D-Day morning?

MR. HAYDEN - We were ordered to put two aircraft each on the two airfields near Havana, and one aircraft each on the airfields near Guantanamo. However, the order to go from 5 to 8 aircraft came in late and it pushed the crew briefing so that they did not have proper target study before the mission. After D-Day it was obvious they had not destroyed the enemy's air capability and there was uncertainty from there on in on the location of the Cuban Air Force's aircraft. The enemy were "turning around" their aircraft in a very short time at their airfields.

GENERAL TAYLOR - What was your "turn around" time?

MR. HAYDEN - We had 7 1/2 hours between our times over target which usually amounted to about 30 minutes. About 2 of this 7 1/2 hours was spent on the ground and the rest in flying to and from the target area. We had very good ground maintenance, and armament people.

MR. KENNEDY - Were these Americans or Cubans?

MR. HAYDEN - These were mainly Americans though we did have some Cubans. The Americans were greatly influenced by General Dossiter, who had pulled these people into the operation and who had excellent control over them.

(Mr. Hayden stated that he had felt exactly what Castro had put into words, that the first air attack only served to make Castro angry and also gave him time to rally his forces.)

GENERAL TAYLOR - You mean the pause after the D-2 air strikes until the actual landings?

MR. HAYDEN - Yes.

(Mr. Hayden then stated that some of his crews had reported ragged naval air cover over the beachhead area. There had been some

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have put American crews in the aircraft. That morning, the 19th, because of lack of Cuban crews, they had scheduled four American B-26 crews. One American crew was shot down that morning, and one was chased off by T-33s. The commander of the second element of the B-26s tried to contact the naval aircraft and when he could not, he elected not to penetrate the coast and he turned back from his mission when he was 35 miles out to sea. One Alabama National Guard Lieutenant Colonel crewmember observed another American crew in a B-26 go into the sea after it was shot down at 1200 ZULU during the period when they had been promised naval air cover.)

MR. DULLES - Did any of your people see any MIGs?

GENERAL CABELL - They've already said that they would have liked to authenticate that, but they couldn't, that it remained only conjecture.

(At this point, Mr. Hayden stressed one point very emphatically, that he thought that one lesson that could be learned was in regard to the inability of the Cuban crews to do an effective job under tough combat conditions. He pointed out that when the going was easy and morale was high, they did a good job, but that by the end of the operation, when things were very difficult, it had been almost impossible to get them into the air at all.)

GENERAL TAYLOR - Why was this naval air cover only to be over the beach for this one special hour?

ADMIRAL BURKE - They didn't want them to be over the beachhead area for a long time, picked up and attributed to the United States. However, because of the serious troubles the landing forces were in, they did want them over the area at first light to protect this first air strike.

MR. HAYDEN - One of our pilots reported that on the road west of Blue Beach that there were an estimated 20 large Russian tanks, and some 50 to 60 trucks. Three of our B-26s made passes on the trucks before they could stop and have the men climb out.

GENERAL TAYLOR - When was this?

MR. HAYDEN - On D-1, I think.

MR. BISSELL - That was Tuesday afternoon.

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COLONEL HAWKINS - We intercepted a message which said that they suffered about 1800 casualties.

MR. HAYDEN - If we hadn't hurt them badly, they would have moved right on down into the landing area.

MR. KENNEDY - Could you tell where the fighting was going on? (At this point, Hayden, at the chart depicted where targets had been seen at points above Blue, Green, and Red Beaches.)

MR. HAYDEN - They moved in tremendously quickly into the area.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Where did they report that flak from?

MR. HAYDEN - They reported flak from all around the area. The Cubans seemed to have excellent coverage and seemed to know what they were doing.

GENERAL TAYLOR - How were the aircraft directed? From the ground by radio?

MR. HAYDEN - No, this wasn't possible as the communications went down with the ship that was sunk. They did land an aircraft on the strip and try to do some controlling with their radio. We then tried to have other aircraft land, but the Cuban pilots' fuel control procedures were bad and they had to turn back.

MR. KENNEDY - You say then that you did not find the Cuban pilots to be very good?

MR. HAYDEN - No. When the chips were down and the going was tough, they found excuses NOT to do the job.

MR. KENNEDY - What percentage would you say did do their job?

MR. HAYDEN - I'd say that not over 35 per cent of them did.

MR. BEERLI - In our early missions, we had some Cuban crews making as many as three passes over heavily defended targets.

MR. HAYDEN - That was in the early days when they smelled victory. When the going got tough, we had trouble even getting them into the aircraft. On D/2, it took us several hours to get some of their crews in the aircraft, and then they aborted the mission.

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ADMIRAL BURKE - When our pilots were over the beachhead on the morning of D/2, they couldn't find any enemy infantry at all.

MR. KENNEDY - Can you tell us where the fighting took place?

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MR. HAYDEN - I'm getting into an area I really cannot answer.

MR. KENNEDY - You say that they had tanks and trucks west of Blue Beach?

COLONEL HAWKINS - On D-Day morning, there were Cuban tanks hitting our troops on Red Beach.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Were there any attempts made at marking lines by smoke or other means? How did your aircraft know that they were not hitting your own troops?

MR. HAYDEN - On our missions in the beachhead area, we were preoccupied with heavy equipment targets. We did not try to put any fire on troops. We always had heavy equipment targets when we were in the area.

MR. KENNEDY - How long did our people last on Red Beach?

MR. HAYDEN - It only seemed to be a matter of hours. The DZs where we dropped by C-46s did not seem to be compromised, so there was spasmodic fire in one or two areas. I don't think they knew that we were going in there.

MR. DULLES - I'd like to get more clear your statement on confusion in regard to orders. I didn't think that you had any question at all in regard to going after airfields on D/2.

MR. BISSELL - We did get authority the previous night to strike airfields at dusk, even though we knew that our aircraft were heavily committed. As I recall, we authorized strikes at airfields at dusk that night.

MR. DULLES - That mission was not carried out.

MR. BISSELL - That's correct Sir. The crews were tired by then, and the ones that did go in, could not identify the San Antonio targets in the haze.

MR. HAYDEN - Our orders to execute the strikes were so different from what we had been told that we would do, that when I saw the orders that we were calling off the war, I really thought we were trying to lose it intentionally, though I didn't say anything aloud in regard to this.

(Mr. Hayden left the conference room at 1700 hours, and General Taylor called an executive session of the committee at this time. The general meeting adjourned at 1701.)

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NO OBJECTION TO MAR 14 2000

CLASSIFICATION: DATE
REQUIRES CONCURRENCE
State (USIA)

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STATE DEPT. DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW
☐ Retain class'n
☒ Declassify after
Change (Specify) with concurrence of
BO 12938, 25X
IPB/CR/IR by SAW Date: MAR 23 2000

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CIA HAS NO OBJECTION TO
DECLASSIFICATION AND/OR
RELEASE OF CIA INFORMATION
IN THIS DOCUMENT AS SANITIZED

MR. PHILLIPS

2/7/00, hkl

(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made).

STATEMENT: I would appreciate your comments on the two paragraphs we intend to include in our report on propaganda.

MR. PHILLIPS: There are only two comments generally. I feel that (1) They give the idea that the propaganda effort was much smaller than it was, and a much more restricted one. (2) They certainly intimate that propaganda activities were carried out without being coordinated with the rest of the U.S. Government. I feel that this is not correct. After the project was approved by President Eisenhower on 17 March 1960, we analyzed our problem. We realized that we had a very tough audience to face because we had to convince the very lowest classes. Consequently, we knew that our major effort had to be in medium wave broadcasts so they could be picked up on the smallest radio sets. Following our original analysis of our problem, on 23 March, I had my first meeting with Mr. Henry Loomis of the Voice of America to discuss broadcasting to Cuba. The general understanding that developed at that meeting was that we faced a problem where we had to create propaganda which at times would have to descend to the level of Castro's propaganda in order to be effective. Furthermore, the propaganda would have to be presented by Cubans, rather than by people who worked for the Voice of America. Consequently, it was our understanding that the prime responsibility for broadcasts concerning the Cuban operation was ours rather than USIA's. During this time coordination was carried on however, and we did receive support from USIA. In the fall of 1960, as our radio Swan became more and more tactical, I suggested to Mr. Loomis that the Voice of America begin broadcasting on medium


- 1 -

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waves so all of the people could hear. He stated at the time that he felt we should continue with the existing arrangement, and this was mutually agreed. On the morning of the break of relations with Cuba I once again contacted Mr. Loomis and suggested that in order to present a calm U.S. viewpoint to the people of Cuba, they might again think about broadcasting in medium wave bands. A short time after, Mr. Loomis called and told me there had been a meeting on the subject and they felt that we should continue to carry the ball as far as broadcasting to Cuba. This decision was accepted. Our regular stations throughout the area



Also, we were producing, and are still producing in Miami, programs on tapes made by Cuban exiles which are air expressed to about 40 stations in five countries around the Caribbean. Since in these countries the big stations usually simultaneously broadcast both medium and short wave, many of these programs can also be heard in Cuba. So, what it boils down to is that on the morning after D-Day, a person in Cuba could have picked up, by utilizing both medium and short wave, literally dozens of radio stations which were bringing in news of what was happening. Specifically, however, we had radio Swan as our principal, tactical station. However, in actuality this was simply the center of a series of satellite stations which were helping us. We had WGBS in Miami, a very powerful medium wave station. We had a medium wave station in Key West, and we broadcast from a series of other stations from countries all around the Caribbean. Immediately before D-Day we were broadcasting a

- 2 -

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total of 18 hours a day regular broadcasting to Cuba and 16 hours a day of short wave broadcasting. This is a total of 34 hours a day immediately before D-Day. Now this does not reflect our unusual operations. For instance, within the country [REDACTED]


[REDACTED] and they carried on a clandestine broadcasting operation utilizing the dormant channels of TV sets in Havana. This was carried on for several months right up to D-Day. On D-Day and immediately thereafter we stepped up our broadcasting until we were broadcasting 55 hours a day on medium wave and 26 hours a day on short wave for a total of 81 hours a day during D-Day and immediately thereafter. Once again this does not represent the clandestine stations, and so on, that we used. As a part of our propaganda effort aside from the political and military, we recruited and trained and infiltrated small provocateur teams. We sent in some [REDACTED] and so on. These people were trained, they carried printing presses, radios, etc. in with them. They successfully published a clandestine newspaper in Havana, and a [REDACTED] carried out the only really successful political action that occurred in Havana before D-Day, which was a student strike. It was effective enough to force the government to close the schools before the year was out. Also, during this time we carried on a leaflet campaign. We ran a total of 23 missions; 16 were straight propaganda drops and 7 were combined with supply drops. In any event, we hit some 44 targets. In several cases we dropped these leaflets because they were requested by radio from our teams inside. Also during this time we had the responsibility for carrying on anti-Castro propaganda throughout Latin America. We published three weekly newspapers, one of them a Spanish language weekly, [REDACTED] in the world.

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We mailed small clandestine issues of this weekly into Cuba from nine different countries, and infiltrated them by boat. We also let them float in in plastic containers on waves.

MR. PHILLIPS: Some six or seven weeks before the military operation we drafted the propaganda plan in support of the military operation and this was approved one month before the operation. It was approved first by Colonel Hawkins and I believe Mr. Bissell also saw the paper. This plan set forth the things that we were going to do directly in support of the military operation. At this phase of the operation we turned ourselves completely over to the military and responded to their guidance rather than recommending what we thought was best. Among the things we did, we trained two teams capable of going into Cuba to take over captured radio stations or captured newspapers. We had a radio propaganda transmitter which went in with the Brigade and we had trained the men who were to operate it.

 We used our radio stations as a means of providing direct communications with people that otherwise didn't have radio communication. In order to do this we supplied every fourth member of the Brigade with a transistor radio capable of receiving both short and medium wave, and we had at the air base some 800 of these radios with little red parachutes attached to them ready to drop to the Brigade if they were needed or to drop over areas where electrical power went out and people couldn't hear what was going on. Also, in support of the military operation we had printed some 11 different leaflets, a total of some 15 million leaflets which were at the air base and literally at the point of being loaded on the airplane when we found out that the airplanes were not going to go. One of these leaflets was designed for the military, it told the Navy men what to do, the Army men, the Air Force men, and the militia. Another was for the people in

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small towns, and another for the people in large towns. Several were for the militia. One was the safe conduct for those forces near the Brigade, instructing them how they should surrender, and so on. The fact that these leaflets were not dropped was certainly a weakness in the operation. However, the messages contained in the leaflets, and some of these leaflets were signed by Cardona without his knowledge, did give instructions to the people, and they were read on the radio in many cases.

QUESTION: Where did you get the guidance as to the type of information you were supposed to put out?

MR. PHILLIPS: That was my job, the military would tell me their objective and I would develop the propaganda necessary to support their operation.

QUESTION: Did the State Department know what you were putting out?

MR. PHILLIPS: No, Sir.

QUESTION: Well this would seem to be a dereliction of their assigned responsibility.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, I was in daily contact with Mr. Devine.

QUESTION: As I understand it then, in January before the new Administration came in, Mr. Loomis agreed that you had complete responsibility for the propaganda operation. Did this include both overt and covert?

MR. PHILLIPS: Covert only.

QUESTION: Would you please define your understanding of covert propaganda?

MR. PHILLIPS: When none of the propaganda can be traced to the United States Government.

QUESTION: During this period the State Department was charged with the responsibility of providing guidance, did they in fact provide this guidance?

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MR. PHILLIPS: They answered specific questions that we had with regard to policy, and they provided some guidance at the higher level at regular, I believe weekly meetings, on the Cuban question. Anything that developed at these meetings which pertained to propaganda was passed on to me by the CIA representative that attended the meeting. From this source we received very definite guidance, for example, to attempt to make this operation appear as an uprising rather than as an invasion.

QUESTION: Where did the figure 4000 or 5000 troops in the invasion force develop?

MR. PHILLIPS: Within the U.S. press.

QUESTION: Would you comment on the implied criticism from USIA that they never knew when or where this operation would take place?

MR. PHILLIPS: It's true that I did not inform them.

QUESTION: Why weren't they informed as to the invasion?

MR. PHILLIPS: I really can't answer that; however, they should have been.

QUESTION: What is the present policy with regard to propaganda operations against the Castro regime?

MR. PHILLIPS: We still have our mechanisms and our primary effort at this time is to try to convey to the Cubans the idea that they should not give up hope, that all is not lost. However, we are definitely attempting to avoid any messages that would tend to incite the people within Cuba.

QUESTION: Is this governmental policy or is it primarily a CIA policy?

MR. PHILLIPS: I believe it is essentially CIA policy; however, it is my belief after talking with Henry Loomis and others that it is the accepted U.S. Government policy.

- 6 -

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NSA HAS NO OBJECTION TO
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RELEASE OF CIA INFORMATION
IN THIS DOCUMENT
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NO J/S OBJECTION TO
DECLASSIFICATION: DATE

MAR 14 2000

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RELEASE OF CIA INFORMATION
IN THIS DOCUMENT

REQUIRES CONCURRENCE
OF NSC, OSD, State

2/7/00, bkh

NO DIS objection
for 4/15/00

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

PARAMILITARY STUDY GROUP MEETING

AT CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

25 APRIL 1961

1000 HOURS

PRESENT

GENERAL TAYLOR

MR. KENNEDY

MR. DULLES

ADMIRAL BURKE

GENERAL CABELL

GENERAL GRAY

MR. BARNES

MR. MOORHOUSE

MR. ESTERLINE

COLONEL BEERLI

COLONEL HAWKINS

MR. KING

COLONEL INGELIDO

LT COLONEL TARWATER

COMMANDER MITCHELL

STATE DEPT. DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW

☐ Retain class'n
☒ Declassify

Change/classify to _____
with concurrence of _____
after _____

EO 12958, 25X
IPS/CR/IR by STATE

Date: MAR 22 2000

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3-20-2000

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(The following notes are ~~not~~ a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

QUESTION: What limitations were placed on CIA with regard to using U. S. military personnel.

ANSWER: There was no legal limit on the numbers or types of personnel that could be assigned, the only limiting consideration being the problem of disclosure.

SUGGESTION: It would be helpful if the President was given a memo setting forth the evidences of the direct involvement of Communist personnel in the operation.

RESPONSE: CIA agreed to prepare such a memorandum for the President with information copies for the Paramilitary Study Group.

REQUEST: It was requested that a paper and/or map covering a period several months prior to the invasion be prepared indicating all Cubans prepared to revolt.

RESPONSE: CIA indicated that a map had been prepared indicating the agents with whom they were in contact and that this would be provided to General Taylor.

QUESTION: Had an attempt been made to have anyone enter the objective area for reconnaissance prior to the operation.

ANSWER: No. For security reasons and because photographs had given no evidence of any significant activity in the area.

QUESTION: What were the sources of intelligence prior to the operation.

ANSWER: SpecInt, agent reports and photographs. Photographs were received at least several times a week.

REQUEST: That some of these photographs be made available to the Study Group.

RESPONSE: CIA agreed to make these photographs available.

STATEMENT: The point was made that not only U. S. troops were restricted in the action they could take, but we prevented foreigners that we had trained from using their weapons to their maximum capability.

STATEMENT: One of the greatest problems encountered in developing this force was the difficulty in getting the Cubans to subliminate their petty differences for the common good.

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STATEMENT: One fact that misled our estimate of the opposition we would meet was that prior to the Zapata Operation there has never been a pitched battle before between Cubans.

REQUEST: That all professional military people involved in the operation and in training the force be identified.

RESPONSE: CIA indicated this would be provided.

QUESTION: At some point would it be desirable to have the conclusions of all key people involved in the operation.

ANSWER: Yes.

REQUEST: General Taylor requested a re-briefing on the Air Plan and further information on the reported air ammunition shortage.

RESPONSE: CIA indicated this would be provided.

REQUEST: General Taylor requested the reconstitution of the intelligence that influenced the decisions, this to be presented in such form as to indicate the decisions influenced.

At this point Colonel Hawkins briefed on the actual operation. He prefaced his remarks by pointing out that the information on which his report was based was limited and incomplete.

When the 15 April air strikes were originally considered it was suggested that they be conducted for two days without restriction. However, due to political considerations it was decided to conduct limited strikes on D-2 and limited strikes on dawn of D-Day. It was decided to use two B-26 aircraft against each of three airfields on which all Cuban tactical aircraft were based, San Antonio de los Banos, Campo Libertad, and Santiago de Cuba.

Reconnaissance flights on 8, 11 and 13 April indicated the Cubans had 36 combat aircraft although many of these were not operable. Consequently it was decided to increase the aircraft in the air strikes from six to eight with one additional aircraft assigned as a spare.

The D-2 air strikes were planned to destroy Castro's combat aircraft on the ground. It now appears that these air strikes destroyed all of Castro's tactical aircraft except for two Sea Furies, two B-26s, and three to four T-33s.

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Opinions were expressed generally favoring the view that if the D-Day air strikes had been conducted as originally planned all of Castro's tactical aircraft would have been destroyed or at least eliminated to the extent that the invasion force could have survived.

It was pointed out that all but eight or nine operable aircraft had been destroyed and that four of these were eliminated on D-Day by the invasion force.

The question was raised as to why the T-33s had not been destroyed. Several possible answers were given, including the restriction against the use of napalm, self-imposed by CIA, and the possibility that the aircraft on one runway had not been attacked.

QUESTION: Were you surprised at the effectiveness of the T-33s.

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: What led to the decision to conduct air strikes on D-2.

ANSWER: The strikes were timed to coincide with Nino Diaz landing in the Oriente and it was desired to tie the air strikes in with the defections.

STATEMENT: We knew before the landing that Castro retained operational operational tactical aircraft.

QUESTION: Why were limitations placed on the air strikes.

ANSWER: In order to reduce the appearance of a major military operation which would indicate U. S. involvement.

STATEMENT: It is a mistake to focus primary attention on one particular decision. We were operating under the very clear instructions to make this operation appear as one the Cubans could conduct without gross U. S. assistance.

STATEMENT: It was not one decision or one thing that caused failure, but many things.

STATEMENT: In covert operations of this kind political considerations always outweigh the military, with a consequent erosion of the military capability to the point that the operation becomes militarily infeasible.

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STATEMENT: This raises one of the vital considerations before this Group, the conflict between the desire for political acceptability and military effectiveness.

STATEMENT: The point was made that political considerations must be given their due weight, but if this results in making the operation militarily infeasible the President should be advised that the plan is no longer feasible. He cannot be expected to remember all the details of a plan nor the significance of one seemingly minor change in a military operation.

STATEMENT: The President had frequent consultations with military representatives.

STATEMENT: The DOD was not consulted in the decision to call off the air strikes.

STATEMENT: It is dangerous to conduct meetings where military advice is required when only one officer from one service is present. This was the case during six or eight meetings.

QUESTION: Were the D-Day air strikes previously approved.

ANSWER: The paper setting forth the air strikes was passed around at the April 12th meeting. This paper made clear that there would be air strikes, but not an all-out effort. However, this document was only passed around at the meeting, read and considered by some, and collected after the meeting. It is doubtful if the President read it or understood the details.

QUESTION: What led to the cancellation of the air strikes.

ANSWER: At 1300 Sunday it was understood that the plan, including the air strikes for dawn of D-Day, had been approved. At about 7:00 P.M. CIA representatives were called to Mr. Rusk's office. He was concerned over the apparent defection of two rather than one B-26 and an additional cargo plane because he felt these additional defections had caused him to mislead Mr. Stevenson. At 10:30 P.M. the CIA tactical commander was advised that the air strikes had been called off. He most strongly urged that this decision be reconsidered and reversed. In debating the air strikes question and in discussing the action to be taken to strengthen

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Mr. Stevenson's position, the President was contacted. In discussing the air strike question the President said he wasn't aware that there were going to be any air strikes on the morning of D-Day. At 2315 D-1 Mr. Rusk announced that there would be no dawn air strikes. At this time the invasion ships were within 5,000 yards of their landing beaches and it was physically impossible to call off the ~~strikes~~ ^{early morning} ~~strikes~~.

QUESTION: Was a strong position on this issue taken with Mr. Rusk.

ANSWER: Probably not strong enough. It was indicated that the worst would be that the invaders would not have their B-26 support and if the ships were ^{cancelled} on their way out the force would be denied its resupply capability.

QUESTION: At the 12 April meeting were the air strikes an issue.

ANSWER: No, the plan appeared to have jelled.

STATEMENT: There were only verbal instructions. These were not written, signed directives and the only papers that were available were fuzzy. The issues were never clearly resolved.

STATEMENT: I understood there was to be one final briefing involving all the participants and setting forth the entire plan. This was never done. Had this briefing been held the ultimate decisions might have been different.

STATEMENT: After cancellation of the air strikes an attempt was made to minimize the probable damage. At 0400 D-Day a CIA representative contacted the State Department to see if the Navy's protective CAP could be extended from the 20-mile limit to 15 or preferably a three-mile limit. The State Department objected and the President, in attempting to prevent U. S. attribution, confirmed that the Navy's protective CAP limit would not be changed. He did approve, however, ^{early morning} EW support. Prior to this Presidential determination an alerting order had been sent to CINCLANT and he had turned his force around to be in a position to provide CAP and EW support if so ordered.

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By the time it became apparent we would not receive air CAP we sent out a message to put the troops ashore and move the ships out to sea.

The brigade troops commenced landing at Blue Beach at 0100.

0300 - The CARIBE had completed unloading.

0330 - The troops unloading from the ALANTICO were under fire.

0430 - Troops landed at Blue Beach.

0600 - First LCU ashore.

0630 - Enemy air attacks against shipping and Blue Beach commenced.

0640 - Friendly aircraft arrived.

1730 - Three LCUs had discharged vehicles and tanks.

0825 - Castro T-33 shot down by BLAGAR.

0930 - RIO ESCONDIDO hit and sunk. Crew members rescued and put aboard BLAGAR.

- Brigade reported airstrip ready for use.

1000 - Continuous enemy air attacks against withdrawing ships.

1130 - Brigade reported only four hours ammunition left.

During the Blue Beach landings the HUSTON proceeded up the Bay led by the BARBARA J. They sent a reconnaissance team ashore and it was immediately attacked from the west flank. Two hundred seventy men did land in the vicinity of Red Beach. However, going ashore they saw lights from what appeared to be a construction project which they had not been previously aware of, and when they got ashore they ran into an enemy force estimated to have 800 troops and 12 tanks.

As the HUSTON was proceeding out of the Bay it was hit by a bomb and the ship went aground with approximately 130 personnel aboard.

As regards the airborne landing little detailed information is available. However, all the aircraft returned safely reporting that the troops had jumped over their intended landing places. Furthermore, reports indicate some of the airborne personnel were occupying their assigned positions.

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During the course of D-Day the decision was made to conduct night air attacks against San Antonio de los Banos and Campo Libertad in an attempt to destroy Castro's air capability. The value of these attacks was negligible.

Also during the night of 17-18 April three air drops were made at the landing beaches. One landed in the drop zone, one in the sea, and one drifted inland.

? On D+1 at about 0730 the 2d Battalion reported it could not maintain its position without air support for more than 30 minutes.

0824 - The Brigade Commander reported that Blue Beach was under attack by 12 tanks and four jet aircraft. The need for ammunition and supplies was repeated.

1010 - Red Beach wiped out.

1200 - Blue Beach under attack by MIG-15s and T-33s, out of tank ammunition, and almost out of small arms ammunition.

1600 - ESSEX reported long line of tanks and trucks approaching Blue Beach from East.

Enemy air attacks and shortage of ammunition continued to be reported for the rest of the day. Ammunition and food were air-dropped on the airstrip. On the afternoon of D+1 three friendly B-26s intercepted a column of enemy tanks and trucks, causing 1,800 casualties. At this point it was emphasized that the over-all plan had been based on control of the air and this action was cited as evidence of what the B-26s would have been able to accomplish if the air plan had succeeded.

1800 - 1st Battalion reported under heavy artillery attack.

2000 - The Brigade Commander was advised that he would be evacuated after dark. He replied saying, "I will not be evacuated. We will fight to the end here if we have to."

During the night of 18-19 April Navy CAP was again requested and permission was granted for one hour air CAP between 0630 and 0730. These aircraft were issued instructions to defend the invasion force from enemy air attack, but not to attack ground targets.

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When it came time for the friendly forces to launch their air strikes the Cuban air crews were either exhausted or demoralized by the lack of air cover, consequently American crews were dispatched. One American crew was shot down during the period of Navy air cover and another was shot down when air cover was not provided.

At 0600 on the 19th of April enemy air strikes commenced. From 0710 to 1430 the enemy was closing in and the Brigade Commander was sending frantic appeals for air cover. Finally at 1430 he sent his final message saying, "Am destroying all equipment and communications. Tanks are in sight. I have nothing left to fight with. Am taking to woods. I cannot wait for you."

QUESTION: What sort of anti-tank equipment did the force have?

ANSWER: A number of 3.5-inch bazookas; five tanks; two 75 mm recoilless rifles; and an undetermined number of anti-tank mines.

STATEMENT: In considering the possible reasons for the shooting down of the B-26 during the period of Navy air CAP it was suggested that the rules of engagement may have unduly restricted the Navy.

QUESTION: What specific intelligence got to the President?

ANSWER: NIEs, intelligence annexes and briefings.

STATEMENT: It would be desirable to examine the ground rules and determine the price we paid to try and keep within political limitations.

STATEMENT: It appears this operation was simply too big to remain covert.

Colonel Beerli, head of Air Operations for the CIA, briefed (TAB-A) on air aspects of the operation. His position for this operation was coordinate with Colonel Hawkins. Lieutenant Colonel Gaines was his chief deputy for this operation. Lieutenant Colonel Gaines had a staff of 14 people working on this operation in Washington. Except for the security, administration and cover people the personnel assigned were members of the Air Force. The actual training site in Guatemala was run primarily by Major Campbell with a force of 20 people.

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The point was made that one of the greatest procedural difficulties resulted from the physical separation of the air staff from the rest of the planners under Colonel Hawkins.

Colonel Beerli stated that he had 316 personnel at Puerto Cabezas, of whom 159 were Americans. The Cuban crews were recruited in Miami from 92 personnel that were screened. From these personnel they recruited and/or developed 17 B-26 crews and five C-46 crews. As far as the concept of air operations was concerned the concept varied very little from the beginning. The primary effort was being directed toward eliminating the enemy air force and to provide close support. On the 13th of April the photos indicated that Castro's combat aircraft were located on three airfields. On D-2 eight aircraft were committed against these fields with the results previously mentioned. It was pointed out that the B-26s had been the primary concern and the capability of the T-33s hadn't been appreciated as it wasn't believed that these aircraft were armed.

By late afternoon of D-1 photos indicated that instead of dispersing his aircraft Castro had concentrated them at San Antonio de los Banos.

After the cancellation of the dawn air strikes on D-Day the pilots were briefed to provide close support for the invasion force with at least two aircraft over the beach at all times. Thirteen missions were launched on D-Day in providing close support to the invasion force and in protecting against hostile vessels.

That night six B-26 aircraft were launched against Cuban airfields. However, two aircraft aborted on take-off and the others were not able to identify their targets due to haze.

On D+1 six aircraft were scheduled in support of the beach-head. On the night of D+1 two aircraft got off and struck San Antonio de los Banos. On Wednesday morning two B-26s were committed again and two more were lost.

In summary there were 13 strikes on D-Day, four on D-Day night, six on D+1, and seven on D+2, for a total of 39 air strikes. Seven

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aircraft were lost in these operations. Furthermore, six C-54s made air resupply drops and one C-46 landed on the beachhead airstrip on the evening of D-Day.

STATEMENT: It is believed that the Cuban pilots did as well as could be expected and they would have done better in an aura of victory.

Following this the Group were read a paper by Colonel Hawkins in which he set forth his personal opinion as to some of the deficiencies which became apparent during the operation. Among these deficiencies were:

The lack of clear-cut policy directives- signed. He does not believe that verbal instructions are sufficient.

The slowness of government machinery in making policy decisions.

Overcentralization of control. This prompted some discussion, resulting in the statement that the CIA doesn't have the capability to organize and train paramilitary forces. At this point a message was read from Colonel Hawkins just prior to the invasion in which he indicated that the invasion force was better armed and equipped than some U. S. Infantry units and that Lieutenant Colonel Gaines believed the air unit was as well qualified as the best U. S. Air Force squadron.

Lack of adequate organization and staff. The paramilitary responsibility should go to the DOD.

Training conditions were unsatisfactory. The desirability of using bases on Saipan or in the United States were considered with no conclusions reached.

The meeting adjourned.

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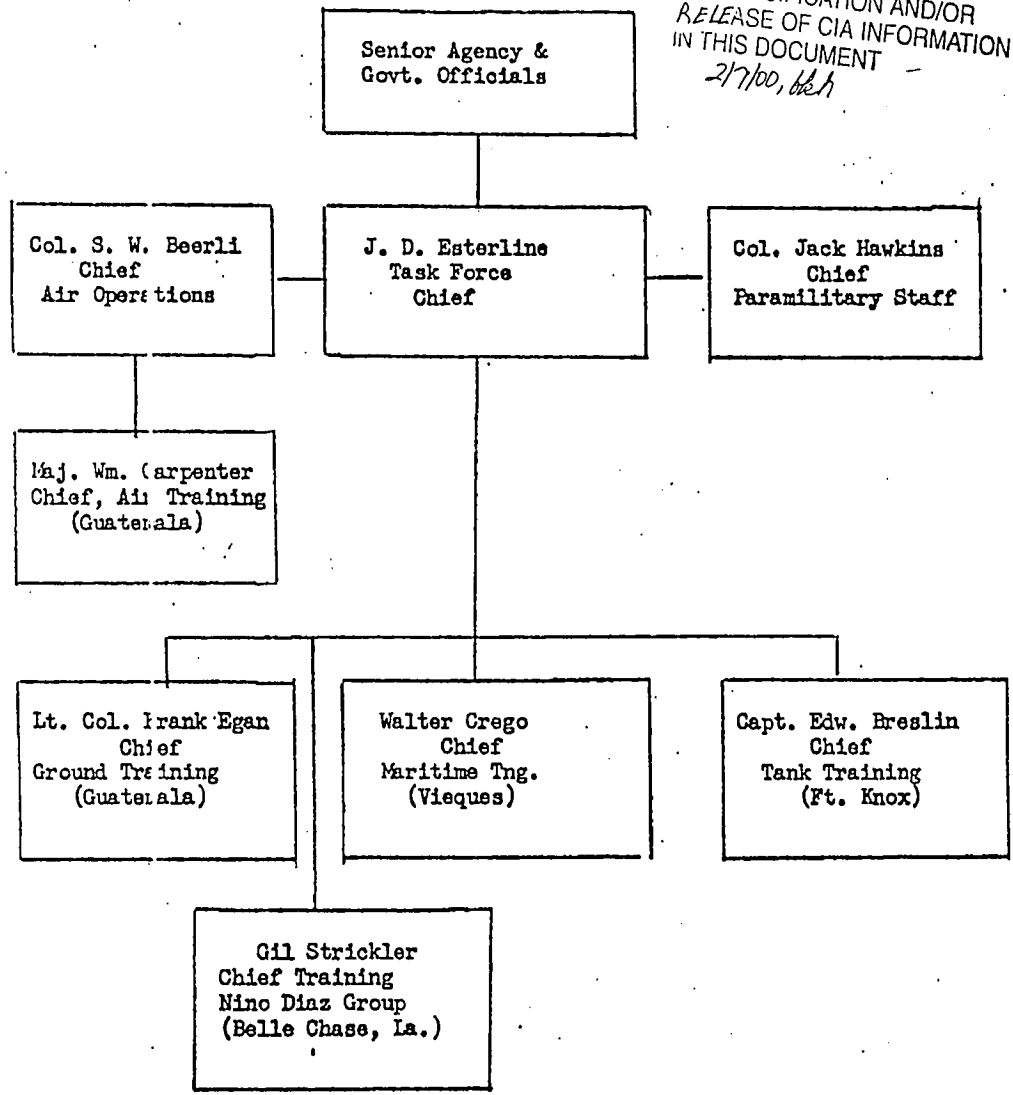
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CHART OF COMMAND ORGANIZATION FOR PLANS
AND TRAINING

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Plans were generated in Headquarters, field commanders were consulted as required. Headquarters and field officers consolidated plans in conference.

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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

PARAMILITARY STUDY GROUP MEETING

AT THE PENTAGON

FOURTH MEETING

26 APRIL 1961

PRESENT

GENERAL TAYLOR

MR. KENNEDY

ADMIRAL BURKE

GENERAL CABELL

GENERAL McGARR

GENERAL GRAY

MR. BISSELL

COMMANDER MITCHELL

LT COLONEL TARWATER

*no objection
for 4/5/00*
NO OBJECTION
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WMS 3-20-2000

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(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

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The basic problem in Indo-China is one of Communist insurgency. This insurgency results in large measure from the fact that the insurgents can enter anywhere along an 850-mile long border and Diem does not have adequate forces to provide more than an alert capability. These Communist insurgents are good, tough, and motivated and they are tied together by an effective communications net. They have been successful to the extent that Diem now controls only 42% of the country.

Some of the reasons for the insurgents' success are that when the Communists withdrew from the South previously, they took many youths from that area with them. These youths were trained and are now hard-core, effective Communists and have been reinfilitrated into Diem's area. Communists are sabotaging all aspects of national power, political and economic as well as military. They have set up a liberation front as a legal device for furthering their objectives.

As a result of these actions the Communist insurgents have succeeded in tying up 80-85% of Diem's armed forces 24 hours a day. Furthermore, the enemy can increase his effort as he has a massive reinforcement capability. Four million out of the 12 million people in the country are Communist.

General McGarr pointed out that the Indo-Chinese problem could not be treated as an individual problem for if we should lose Indo-China we would lose Southeast Asia. He also stated we were losing face in the country. That people were beginning to ask if we would stand by them when their hour of decision came, or whether we would treat them as we have treated Laos.

In order to defeat the insurgents Diem now has a national plan, one of the key elements of which is to seal the borders militarily and politically, primarily by putting a cork across the top of the nation. Then, in accordance with his counter-insurgency plan, the country will be cleared area by area.

Diem's military effectiveness is improving. One of the reasons for this is that interservice coordination has now been established. Furthermore, the U.S. Element has been quite successful in their training efforts and in impugning the Indo-Chinese with additional will and determination. This is attested to by the fact that since the first of the year Diem's units have initiated at least two-thirds of the actions against the insurgents.

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General McGarr stated that most of the actions that have to be taken right now in order to at least suppress the insurgents, to the extent that Diem can operate, are now under way. However, these actions have not been budgeted for and it is imperative that Diem be provided an additional 50 million dollars in order to finance these essential programs.

General McGarr stated that he believed we should back Diem to the hilt as he is one of the most effective anti-Communists in the world today.

QUESTION: If we put guerrillas into the Communist area how many of these insurgents would it tie down.

ANSWER: Well, this is hard to tell. However, one of the considerations is that CIA is building nets in North Vietnam and they feel that these nets should be built before we go in with a guerrilla attack, otherwise we might disturb their operation in the area. Furthermore, when this was discussed with Diem he said, with tongue in cheek, "Well, you know I must be legal in all that I do."

QUESTION: Couldn't we treat the insurgents in Indo-China as the British treated the insurgents in Malaya.

ANSWER: In Malaya they had only a small border with the Thais who helped seal the border. Also, in Malaya they could separate the insurgents from the native population because of their ethnic differences. In Malaya they could use food as a weapon, whereas in Indo-China they don't have to bring food with them. Furthermore, in Malaya Templer made the policy and conducted the operations, and he also had Commonwealth troops and officers to aid in his operation. I might also point out that even with these advantages it still took the British 13 years to put down the insurgency in Malaya.

At this point the Group was adjourned to reconvene at CIA.

QUESTION: How did the President get his intelligence on this operation.

ANSWER: He received a daily intelligence bulletin which included information on Cuba and intelligence was discussed at all the task force meetings. However, he never received any special intelligence briefings, as such, on this problem.

At this point it was decided that it would be helpful to run through the intelligence information contained in the 11 March paper on the proposed operation against Cuba. This intelligence in essence indicated that despite growing

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discontent within Cuba time was against us. Castro was increasing his police state controls and his military effectiveness to the extent that unless some outside support, some shock action, was taken within six months, it would probably be militarily infeasible to overthrow Castro with a force composed of Cuban exiles.

STATEMENT: It should be made very clear that the idea that time was running out weighed very heavily in the decision making.

QUESTION: You mentioned the requirement for shock and yet the invasion plan that was finally implemented was purposely limited.

ANSWER: But the purpose of this, sir, was not to limit the shock on the Cubans, but rather to limit the shock on the rest of the world, making it appear that the invasion was something that the Cubans could do by themselves.

At this point in the meeting the intelligence available to the planners and the tactical commander was discussed. With regard to Castro's air force it was stated that the location of all Castro aircraft was known, even to the extent of knowing which aircraft were operational and which were not. They were surprised, however, by the capabilities of the pilots which Castro committed against the invasion force. In retrospect it was believed that these aircraft were probably flown by 50 Cuban pilots that had been trained in Czechoslovakia and returned to Cuba a few days before the invasion.

With regard to Castro's navy, it was believed that the capability of this force was low and that they would not be inclined to fight. This estimate held good, for only three small vessels were committed, two of which were sunk, while their larger naval units remained at their stations.

The weakest tactical intelligence was on the location of the ground troops. A reason for this was because the militia was not well organized in the sense that no two units were organized exactly the same nor with the same number of personnel. Intelligence was aware, however, of the location of Castro's armored units and his military headquarters. In this connection it had been pointed out that Castro had a force of 6,000 troops armed with tanks and artillery which could arrive at the beachhead within 10 hours. It's believed the tanks used against the invaders were part of this force. If the troops fighting the invasion force were militia, then the estimate of the militia's willingness to fight was incorrect. However, if this force was not militia,

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but rather the force mentioned above spearheaded by foreigners, then the estimates were not wrong.

The possibility that this force was spearheaded by Czechoslovakians was indicated by the report that one of the tanks knocked out had three persons aboard that were not Cuban. Further, another report said that some of the command chatter was in a foreign tongue. With regard to the absence of uprising throughout Cuba during the period of the invasions, it should be pointed out that reports from agents of the numbers of people that were likely to support the invasion had been reduced from 20-30,000 down to 2,500 to 3,000 active guerrillas. It was also stated in the intelligence estimates that there would not be any major uprisings until the Cubans could see visible evidence of the invasion force. Consequently, no major uprisings were anticipated until the invasion force had been able to take towns in the Matanzas Province.

STATEMENT: You are now describing much more than a successful lodgment.

RESPONSE: Yes, but we felt that the force had to move out to make the lodgment visible.

QUESTION: Inasmuch as this was a key element in the JCS decision, was it ever made clear to them this degree of success was necessary in the ultimate success of the operation.

ANSWER: I believe the impression was given that the lodgment should last for at least a week. This would have been a significant factor in influencing potential dissidents.

STATEMENT: It was also hoped that the landings in the Oriente and uprisings in the Pinar del Rio would help create the catalyst necessary to trigger uprisings throughout Cuba.

STATEMENT: One of the factors that made us think that the resistance potential within Cuba was substantial was the fact that we had a backlog of 19 requests from our agents for supplies, arms and ammunition for 8,000 people. These people were crying for supplies. Had we been able to provide this equipment these people would have had something to rise with.

At this point General Taylor requested a brief tabulation of how many reports had been received indicating that people were ready to rise against Castro, and also indicating the number of people that were ready to rise.

STATEMENT: Special Intelligence also gave indication of government concern with dissident activities. These evidences were further substantiated by debriefings of people coming out of Cuba.

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QUESTION: At any time did you give an estimate of the resistance potential within Cuba.

ANSWER: I don't believe any numerical estimate was given.

QUESTION: You did expect enough uprisings throughout the country, however, to start the army of liberation.

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: At no point, however, was any formal estimate of this possibility given.

ANSWER: I have a paper of 3 March in which it was estimated that between 2,500 and 3,000 were actively engaged against Castro, that 20,000 were potential supporters of the invasion force, and that 25% of the population was opposed to the Castro regime.

QUESTION: Did you ever actually define the degree of success necessary to provoke adequate uprising to permit ultimate success.

ANSWER: To establish a beachhead and hold it for some time, approximately a week, together with activities by our air units carrying out their scheduled missions.

QUESTION: Do you believe that the impression prevailed that there would be spontaneous uprisings.

ANSWER: I myself didn't believe there would be major uprisings within 24 to 48 hours.

QUESTION: Do you recall what the JCS said on this issue.

ANSWER: They said the invasion force had a reasonable chance of establishing a lodgment and that ultimate success would depend on uprisings within Cuba.

At this point the JCS Evaluation of the alternate objective area Proposals was read. Following this the question was raised as to whether JCS had ever acted on the Zapata plan. The answer was given that the JCS had been advised of the change by General Gray.

QUESTION: Where in the JCS Evaluation of the Zapata Plan does it say that there will be air strikes.

ANSWER: It doesn't.

STATEMENT: At this stage of the game there was no plan - only concepts. There was no time to develop a plan as such.

STATEMENT: At this point General Gray stated that as he remembered, and as his notes indicated, the Joint Chiefs understood that the Zapata Plan included only D-Day strikes with no pre-D-Day strikes.

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protect the defiles into the landing area. Furthermore, we were concerned about the fact that the ships that went to Red Beach had an 18-mile run and might not get out.

STATEMENT: At the 15 March meeting the President indicated that he did not like the dawn landings and directed that this aspect be reconsidered. On the 16th of March the President approved the revised Zapata Plan for progressive implementation, but he retained the ability to cancel.

QUESTION: At the 16 March meeting was the JCS preference for the original Trinidad Plan over the Zapata Plan presented.

ANSWER: I don't think so.

QUESTION: Do you think it was in the President's mind that these men could disappear as a guerrilla force if necessary.

ANSWER: Yes.

STATEMENT: The Zapata area has traditionally been an area for guerrilla operations.

RESPONSE: When we went to the State Department we discussed the seriousness of calling off the air strikes. However, I did not say that we would cancel the operation because at this time we did not have the ability to call it off.

STATEMENT: I can't believe that if the President had understood how important the air strikes were that he would have called them off.

RESPONSE: All members of the Group concurred.

STATEMENT: If the President's decision had been made earlier I would have flown out to Glen Ora and discussed the matter with him. However, when the decision was finally made it was too late to do this.

At this point Mr. Bissell gave some of his personal views as to some of the wrong judgments made. First, the underestimation of Castro's capability in certain specific respects, mainly his organization ability, speed of movement and will to fight. We also underestimated his air capability. Example, contrary to our opinion, the T-33s were armed and flown with skill, loyalty and determination. In retrospect, some of the reasons for this underestimation may have been the use by Castro of block technicians and, if this is so, it is believed that one of their greatest contributions may have been in the staff work. Our second major mistake was our failure to develop an adequate air

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capability. We should have had at least 50% more B-26 pilots. We should have been able to foresee the need for these pilots. We should have allowed for some attrition, and the two aircraft cover over the beach was understated. Another major mistake was the restriction on the employment of our air capability between D-2 and D-Day. As to the administrative and organizational shortcomings, it is believed that these contributed much to the final failure. Another error was involved in the inevitable conflict between the requirements for military effectiveness and those of disclaimability. In the late stages of this operation I believe unnecessary concessions were made in favor of disclaimability which were unrealistic. Inasmuch as so much of the operation was already common knowledge, our chances of success would have been much greater if we had been allowed to use U.S. soldiers of fortune and to make air strikes from U.S. bases. In any future operations a cold-blooded appraisal should be made of the degree to which it is necessary to make concessions in favor of disclaimability as opposed to military effectiveness.

At this point Mr. Dulles interjected that he was in basic agreement, but he would like to add two additional items. First, he felt that he should have asked the Navy their opinion of what was necessary to assure that the men would get safely ashore with their material during a night landing on an unfamiliar coast. This opinion should have been rendered without concern for political considerations. Another factor was that the President was faced with hurried and difficult decisions. We had made it very clear to him that to call off the operation would have resulted in a very unpleasant situation.

STATEMENT: The odds against any operation of this kind are almost insurmountable until the Government faces up to making sharp decisions promptly.

QUESTION: Did the Government give the CIA an almost impossible job.

ANSWER: I don't believe so. I think we were closer to success than you realize.

STATEMENT: Despite the disaster the U.S. must retain the capability for unofficial military actions. Whenever the U.S. engages in this sort of operation we will again be faced with the same dilemma of disclaimability versus military effectiveness. In this connection, I think we should consider changing our overt foreign policy posture for we have a tendency to make our operations extremely difficult by oversanctimonious announcements.

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STATEMENT: In the future we must carry out any operations of this type in such manner that the President, who has shown the highest courage, will not have to assume the responsibility.

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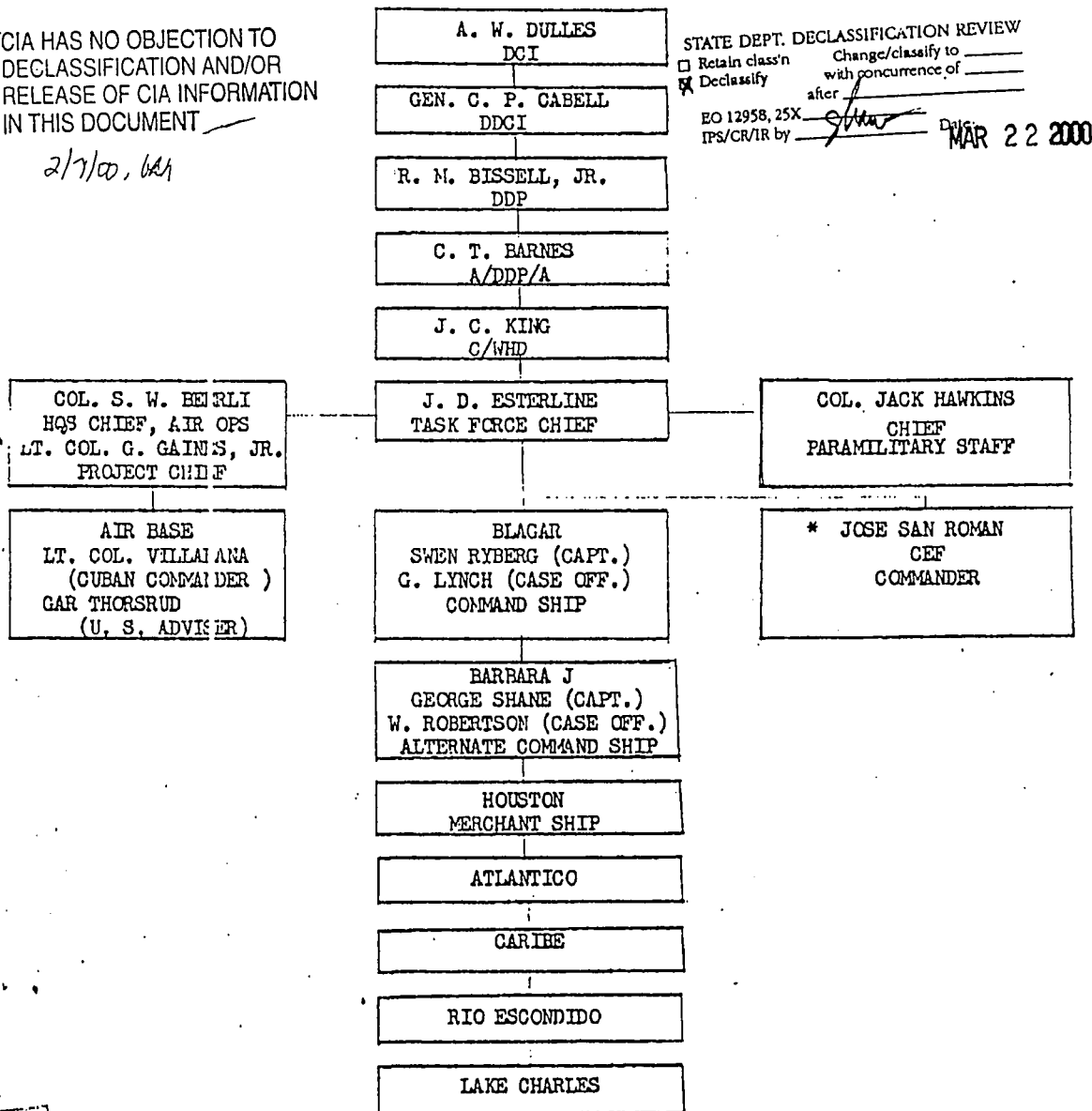
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Orders were released by the Task Force Chief. Coordination was effected, with higher authority, as required.

* In the case of the CEF Commander, the Task Force did not have command subsequent to the commitment of the Brigade. The Task Force role was one of support. This was understood by the Task Force and the Brigade Commander.

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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
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PARAMILITARY STUDY GROUP MEETING

AT THE PENTAGON

27 APRIL 1961

PRESENT

GENERAL TAYLOR

MR. KENNEDY

MR. DULLES

GENERAL ERSKINE

GENERAL GRAY

LT COLONEL WALL

COMMANDER MITCHELL

LT COL TARWATER

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(The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

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The first person to appear before the Group was General Erskine. In explaining his responsibilities, he indicated that he worked with CIA on covert matters and that he also represented the Secretary of Defense on the United States Information Board and the National Security Agency, as well as on counterintelligence matters.

QUESTION: How was your office brought into the Cuba operation.

ANSWER: Our job was primarily one of support. We were not in on the plans or the recommendations. In providing support to the CIA, we normally work through contact officers with the individual services to provide CIA the support they need.

QUESTION: If CIA wants personnel what is the procedure for handling their request.

ANSWER: Generally speaking, they come to us and we provide the personnel on a reimburseable basis.

QUESTION: Is there an agreed number of military personnel that are being utilized by the CIA.

ANSWER: Yes. However, I will have to check on the exact number of personnel that are assigned to CIA from each of the services.

QUESTION: What kinds of support do you furnish to CIA.

ANSWER: We furnish nearly everything if it is available.

QUESTION: How many depots does CIA have.

ANSWER: A major depot [REDACTED] another [REDACTED] and another [REDACTED]. There are all kinds of military supplies in these depots worth probably \$50 million.

QUESTION: Has this equipment in these depots been denationalized.

ANSWER: Yes, all but that which could have been captured from us by another country, or foreign equipment which we have bought or captured.

QUESTION: Does CIA have any Communist planes.

ANSWER: A few broken-up aircraft.

QUESTION: Is there anything in your relationship with CIA

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that you believe should be improved.

ANSWER: No. We do have one proposal, however, that we think is worthwhile. We call it Freedom, Inc. The purpose of this concept would be to provide a trained force of people capable of conducting military operations in different parts of the world. Essentially we would utilize military assistance to train Engineer companies in different countries. The people so trained would be under contract to us in addition to being in their own armies. I say to us - they would be hired by a construction company which, of course, would be a front.

QUESTION: Do you have any comments on organizing to conduct such an operation as was attempted in Cuba.

STATEMENT BY MR. DULLES: Don't hold back on my account. I have already told these people I'd like to get rid of this responsibility except for small operations.

RESPONSE: Of course, the question is what is a small operation. On developing our Freedom, Inc., concept we visualized having a little segment in Defense work with State and CIA on such operations.

STATEMENT: Sometime back we in CIA tried to establish an international air corps, something like the Foreign Legion, so that when any friendly government was threatened it could hire this air force. We found that this was very difficult to do in practice. We ran into such problems as where to put the force, what will the cover be and so on. In this connection, of course, we do have CAT. All the stock is owned by us and we operate as a civil airline. Actually half our pilots are in Laos at the present time.

At this point General Erskine left the room and General Gray appeared to answer questions and give his comments.

QUESTION: Would you give us your personal opinion as to how the Government should be organized in order to cope with a Cuban type situation in the most effective manner.

ANSWER: It seems to me it takes almost a different type

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group for each operation. However, I believe it would be better to start an interdepartmental group that would develop a concept and assign tasks to each of the governmental agencies subject to the approval of the President, and then charge each agency with the execution of these tasks. In the Cuba operation CIA unilaterally developed the concepts. The other governmental agencies were essentially in a supporting role. I believe it's of particular value to have all the agencies participating from the start in order to assure that each agency is aware of all the implications of the operation at the earliest date. For example, in the Cuba operation this would have meant that the State Department would have been brought into the planning in time to work in their ideas and to indoctrinate their people on the over-all concept and the requirements for it.

STATEMENT: You are making the point that the plan should have been conceived and developed by an interagency group.

RESPONSE: That is correct. However, one agency should be given the basic responsibility.

QUESTION: Is this interagency group any different than the special group which is already in existence.

ANSWER: Yes. The special group is simply a high-level group that considers matters brought before it, makes a decision, and then the agencies act on the decision, whereas the interagency group would be a working group that would continue to have responsibility for a given operation.

QUESTION: Did the special group approve the plan to get rid of Castro.

ANSWER: Yes, at the 13 January meeting. The State Department concurred in the CIA view that Castro must go. This determination led to the March 17th paper, which sets forth the basic concept with CIA responsible for three basic aspects of the plan and the State Department responsible for one.

STATEMENT: If General Gray's concept had been used to implement the 17 March paper it seems to me that the primary

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difference would have been that the force that was to invade Cuba would have come under CINCLANT rather than under the CIA. It seems to me that the basic weakness of this concept is the pyramid of committees.

QUESTION: To whom does the DCI report.

ANSWER: Statutorily to the National Security Council.

However, inasmuch as the National Security Council is only advisory to the President the DCI reports to the President.

QUESTION: Do you think 5412 puts the Cuban operation under CIA.

— ANSWER: Yes, if Cuba follows in the spirit of paragraph 6.

QUESTION: Does paragraph 6 describe the Cuba situation.

ANSWER: No, Cuba went beyond it. Of course, every development beyond it went to the President for decision.

STATEMENT: I think the important point is that this document was not designed to cover a Cuba type operation. For example, on the next page it says no open conflict.

STATEMENT: I have a feeling we should look at this thing more broadly than just from the standpoint of a covert operation. Actually it is part of something much broader, which can be called the cold war, which involves all aspects of national power, and paramilitary operations are only one segment of the cold war.

QUESTION: Who is responsible for success in the cold war.

ANSWER: There are really three agencies that are responsible.

STATEMENT: It seems to me there should be a clear line of responsibility, without any committees, running from the President to the Secretary of State to the director of the cold war.

RESPONSE: I don't think one man could handle all the actions.

STATEMENT: We had this problem on the Joint Staff. I believe that what we did to solve the problem for us is also applicable on the national level. We developed a system for monitoring the various countries throughout the world in terms of their criticality. We established the problem areas within the country and then made recommendations as to what actions should be taken in order to best achieve U. S. national interests.

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STATEMENT: You are giving us so much information it is difficult to absorb. Maybe you should give us a briefing.

STATEMENT: One thing our Government really lacks in conducting the cold war is an economic unit that concerns itself primarily with cold war actions.

STATEMENT: It seems to me that we have three courses of action. First, we can maintain the status quo. Second, we can pass the paramilitary responsibilities to the DOD. Or third, we can examine the whole cold war problem.

At this point General Gray left and Lieutenant Colonel Wall, a member of the JCS working group on Cuba, described his part in the Cuban operation. He stated that he joined the working group at the time the original Trinidad Plan was evaluated. Later he was one of three that went into the training area to have a first-hand look at the training operation and to evaluate the capabilities of the force which was being prepared to invade Cuba. Later, in accordance with one of his recommendations, he was returned to the area to help the force prove their amphibious logistic capability. He remained with the force for approximately three weeks.

QUESTION: Would you give us your impressions, please.

ANSWER: These are personal opinions. Troops were trained thoroughly in the use of their weapons. I noted, however, that below the brigade level they were not organized in the usual military manner. In the subordinate units, as far as organization was concerned, there was an individual referred to as the leader. I inquired as to the reason for this. I was informed that it was for psychological reasons and that the subordinate units would have a rank structure when they left for the port. The training I was able to give was minimal and conducted with the brigade staff. This was due to the fact that the actual box movers were not there when I arrived. Fifty finally arrived the last day I was there. The basic logistic concept of the force was that the supplies would be put on the beach and the troops would come back and get what they needed.

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QUESTION: How can you account for the fact that they had no amphibious training prior to your arrival.

ANSWER: I can't answer that.

QUESTION: How would you say that the men in the invasion force compared with troops that we would have.

ANSWER: Physically they were in good shape. I would say, however, that in a fight it would be like putting our Marines against Boy Scouts. I believed that the over-all chance of military success was about 15%, that logistically the operation would likely fall apart. I stated this in the original JCS evaluation. The transportation was totally inadequate in that they had assigned trucks to individual commanders instead of having these under central control. They did not have a fuel capability to support air operations. The 50-gallon fuel drums weighed 400 pounds and had to be manhandled. They had no bridging capability. They had no floodlight systems and consequently they couldn't work the beaches at night. Their plans for distribution of supplies from the dump areas were practically nonexistent. They had no maintenance equipment beyond hand tools.

QUESTION: What condition were they in logistically when you left.

ANSWER: Essentially the same condition as when I arrived, except that I had jerry-rigged a TACLOG and they had acquired a crawler crane to help unload things on the beach.

STATEMENT: The major fault with the whole operation was that it was too loose, there was no control. In my opinion it was primarily a lack of planning.

QUESTION: When the objective area was changed from Trinidad to Zapata did it change your estimate.

ANSWER: No. Equipmentwise they had added a traveling crane. However, in the original Trinidad Plan they were going to use trucks or the dock to unload. In the Zapata Plan the logistics had to go in across the beach.

QUESTION: was there any attempt to rehearse the logistic actions.

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ANSWER: I do not know.

STATEMENT: I am confused. Were you in a minority.

RESPONSE: We didn't say it wouldn't work because without opposition they could have unloaded in three days. I said their capability was marginal without resistance, but impossible with it.

STATEMENT: As far as ammunition goes the troops carried one unit of fire slightly more than U. S. troops. In addition, each took all he could carry. Each troop should have had ammunition for one day plus what he could carry. Furthermore, the trucks that got ashore gave them an additional supply of ammunition. As for communications equipment, it was excellent. The invasion force had more and better equipment than one of our 25,000-man divisions. The loss of the ships, however, denied the commander his cryptic capability which was a serious handicap. However, one dangerous tendency developed as the operation progressed. This was the tendency to flood the invasion force with supplies. Actually they had 1,200 tons of supplies available to them and only one crane and plain manpower available to unload it. The basic problem they faced was not the lack of supplies, as such, but rather bridging the gap between the ships 25 miles offshore and the landing beach.

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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

PARAMILITARY STUDY GROUP MEETING

AT THE PENTAGON

28 APRIL 1961

NSC
INTERNAL SECURITY COUNCIL
LMS 3-20-2000

PRESENT

GENERAL TAYLOR

MR. KENNEDY

MR. DULLES

ADMIRAL BURKE

ADMIRAL DENNISON

CAPTAIN FERGUSON

COMMANDER McCAULEY

MR. LYNCH

MR. KING

COLONEL MALLARD

COMMANDER MITCHELL

LT COLONEL TARWATER

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MANDATORY REVIEW
CASE # NLK- 98-100
DOCUMENT # 8

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The first order of business was the reading of a report of conversation between a CIA representative and approximately sixty of the Cuban Volunteer Air Force returnees. The report stated that while many of the returnees had specific complaints and criticisms of how the project was conducted, there was little, if any, trace of genuine bitterness or hostility toward the United States. There was no defeatism amongst the returnees and the question most asked was, "When do we get going again?" Some of the returnees' observations were as follows:

- a. Failure to follow the D-2 air strikes was a serious mistake as it gave Castro time to mobilize his forces and left elements of his air force intact.
- b. The landings should not have been permitted until complete domination of the air had been achieved.
- c. The operation was defeated by three planes.
- d. None of the pilots saw MIGs. They doubted that any of Castro's aircraft were piloted by non-Cubans.
- e. None believed that Castro had been aware of the landing site, although they admitted that he had moved in with tanks and trucks at great speed.
- f. They explained the absence of popular uprisings by the fact that the landing was in an isolated area; and, second, the notorious fact that eighty per cent of the Cubans will never join an insurrection until they are sure that it is winning. Nevertheless, they pointed out that mass arrests throughout Cuba neutralized many of the people who would have revolted before these people were aware that an invasion was taking place.
- g. Little, if any, reference was made to the Revolutionary Council.
- h. Most of the Air Force personnel seemed certain that they would soon be returning to action.
- i. All the returnees were unstinting in their praise of their U. S. instructors.

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In answer to a previous question, Mr. Dulles read the figures of the military personnel that were assigned to the Central Intelligence Agency as of 30 April 1961, as follows:

Army, 62 officers and 261 enlisted men; Air Force, 118 officers and 205 enlisted men; Navy, 13 officers and 20 enlisted men; Marine Corps, 9 officers and 9 enlisted men, making a total of 202 officers and 495 enlisted men, for a grand total of 697 military personnel assigned to the Central

Intelligence Agency. (The following notes are not a verbatim record, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

COLONEL MALLARD

At this point, Colonel Mallard appeared before the Group. He stated that he had primarily served as a liaison officer between the Central Intelligence Agency, the DOD and, to a limited degree, with the State Department. Further, on the 14th of April he and a radio operator went aboard the ESSEX. They proceeded to a point south of Cuba where they intercepted the invasion force ships.

QUESTION: Was the rendezvous on time?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: There is no question in your mind as to a possible loss of surprise?

ANSWER: No. It went better than I expected.

QUESTION: Did you have radio contact with the Cuban ships?

ANSWER: Yes, to some extent.

STATEMENT: The transfer from the LSD took place without incident and the Navy withdrew.

QUESTION: Why do you think the two LCIs stayed in the area after two of the other ships had been sunk, while several other merchant ships left the area and continued going south?

ANSWER: Because of the influence of the Americans aboard the LCIs.

STATEMENT: The ATLANTICO finally stopped, but the CARIBE just kept on going until intercepted by a destroyer.

QUESTION: Did the CARIBE have ammunition aboard?

ANSWER: It had considerable aviation gas and ammunition aboard, yes.

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- 2 -

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QUESTION: Where did the orders to the ship commanders originate?

ANSWER: From Washington.

QUESTION: How long did it take for the orders to be transmitted?

MR. KING: I read messages twenty minutes after they had been sent.

STATEMENT: At the White House, we were twelve hours behind.

STATEMENT: We sent some dispatches from Washington to the skippers to which they never responded.

MR. KENNEDY: I would say that one of the greatest problems was the inadequacy of communications.

COLONEL MALLARD: I believe it would have been desirable if the Navy had provided us with a back-up communications capability.

QUESTION: Can we have a briefing on this communications problem?

ANSWER: Yes, I believe Mr. Georgia, who drew up the communications plan for the entire operation, would be the best man to talk to you about this.

MR. LYNCH

At this point, Colonel Mallard left and Mr. Lynch entered. He stated that he was a retired Army officer with four years special force experience. He stated that he ran the Operation Center aboard one of the LCIs and that he was in contact with the brigade commander for three days and nights. He also stated that he had a few points he wanted to make as an American. He stated that:

- (1) We had a sound plan and it would have worked if we'd had air support.
- (2) The brigade was winning. If they'd have had ammunition, they would have inflicted tremendous damage on Castro.
- (3) The men in this force fought as well as any he had ever seen.

STATEMENT: We made the assembly on time. Then I led the UDT Team into the beach. As we moved into the beach, I could see six men looking out to sea. Consequently, I turned off the engine on our boat to look and listen and see if I could determine if it was

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us they were looking for. However, everything was quiet, and as I looked around I could see only blackness. These men then went into a house and the lights went out. About that time, a little later rather, a jeep came down to the beach and turned their lights right on us. At that point, we opened up on him with everything we had. I then called the ships, and told them that we had been spotted, and for them to move on in. We then put out red and white lights to mark the beach; and about that time all the lights in the town went out at once, which made it obvious that someone had developed a plan. As the boats moved in to Blue Beach, they were fired on by only one machine gun from the town. Two of the LCVs came in and rammed on a coral reef. If we hadn't been discovered, we would have found channels through which the landing craft could have moved to the beach. The men showed good discipline as they went ashore. At exactly six o'clock, just after first light, Red Beach called and said that they were under air attack. I'd like to make the point right here that the blue identifying band on the friendly B-26s was not adequate. We didn't know which B-26s were friendly and which were enemy until they opened fire. At daylight we found the channel for the LCUs. By ten o'clock all the LCUs were unloaded. The LCUs were also utilized in bringing the troops ashore, and all the troops did get ashore. There were about 100 militia in the town at Blue Beach. Seventy were captured and 30 got in a truck and went to Cienfuegos for help apparently. Our people talked to the Chief of Militia in the town, who said that he had been completely misinformed and that henceforth he would give complete cooperation to the invasion force.

QUESTION: How did Artima's act?

ANSWER: Excellent. He was a dedicated leader and a most moving speaker. Mr. Lynch said that he was no double agent, as reported by some newspapers.

STATEMENT: We could fight off the B-26s and the Sea Furies, but we couldn't touch the T-33s. They fired their rockets from close in and didn't miss, and our fire didn't bother them a bit.

- 4 -

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STATEMENT: The merchant ships just ran off and left us. They had the ammunition. Every ship had ammunition. The main communications equipment was aboard the ATLANTICO and it left, as I previously mentioned.

STATEMENT: Our aircraft behaved wonderfully.

STATEMENT: The first attack at Red Beach came at ten o'clock with approximately 500 militia and tanks.

STATEMENT: Landing in the swampy area was a good idea, because after their first attack the militia would not attack without tank support, and the only way you could get through the swamps was on the narrow roads. If we'd had air superiority, we'd have been in an extremely strong position.

STATEMENT: On the night of D-Day we were scheduled to make a fast ammunition supply run in to the beach. However, by the time we received the order and would have had time to make the necessary preparations it was too late. We couldn't have arrived there until after first light. The primary problem the brigade commander faced was the lack of ammunition. He constantly made requests for ammunition, and stated that all he needed was ammunition and air support. I believe it's true that the ground attacks never really hurt the brigade, for the brigade was still in good condition when the end came. They just ran out of ammunition. (See Tab A)

STATEMENT: One of the Cuban officers said that the forces employed in the invasion area were militia, not regular army troops. We hadn't known that the militia could run tanks.

QUESTION: Did Castro use any MIGs?

ANSWER: As far as we know, there were only T-33s in the area. However, one man, when asked to draw a picture of the type aircraft he was calling a MIG, did draw the outline of a MIG rather than a T-33.

QUESTION: Do you think that Castro's force fought well?

ANSWER: No, sir. When you stopped the tanks, they stopped; that is, after the first attack. After the first attack they wouldn't go anywhere without a tank.

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STATEMENT: One man insisted that they were gassed by tank shells at night. He stated they found that a shell from a tank sort of choked them, and they all ran out of the area; and that later they found ten dead men with no marks on them.

QUESTION: What about the air drops?

ANSWER: The first was dropped directly over the airfield, but the wind blew it off the runways into the swamps. The second one was dropped on the town and every package was recovered. The third was dropped over the town, but the wind blew it into the water. However, most of this was recovered. One C-46 was landed just at daylight bringing in some tank ammunition, and it took out one wounded man. However, the airfield had been in usable condition, even including lights.

At this point, Mr. Lynch left and Admiral Dennison appeared before the Group.

ADMIRAL DENNISON

STATEMENT: My first knowledge that something might happen with regard to Cuba goes back to April 1960, when we helped construct facilities on Swan Island. The next indication I had was when the commander of my amphibious force advised me that he had the task of sanitizing some landing craft, as well as transporting these craft in an LSD to Puerto Rico. At this point, I consulted with General Lemnitzer and asked him if the JCS was aware of these activities. General Lemnitzer told me that he knew something of the activities. At that time he called General Cabell and requested that I be informed of the operation. Consequently, a CIA representative came down and briefed me on a portion of the plan. He explained that the planning for the operation was compartmentalized and that no one group knew all about the operation.

STATEMENT: On the 9th of February I had the privilege of talking with the President. I asked him if I would be engaged in any possible bail-out operations. He responded definitely no, that if anything went wrong the force would fade into the hinterland. The JCS Directive of 7 April set forth the nature of the naval

- 6 -

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operation that would be required and directed the mission be executed in such manner that the United States could plausibly deny that we had any part in the operation. On 1 April 1961 I issued my own operation order which set up, among other things, the rules of engagement for surface ships and for the air patrol (Tab B). On 1 April I received JSM-365-61, which gave me my basic orders and also indicated that the CIA was responsible for the planning and implementation of the operation with the DOD in a support role.

STATEMENT: As of this date, I have never seen a copy of the Cuban Invasion Plan. As things turned out, it would have been most helpful if I had. For example, when we observed the PERKA we thought it was a ship that had been taken over by the refugees. We had no knowledge of the men aboard the PERKA. Furthermore, when we were called upon to start the rescue operation, we didn't know how many men were in there, what particular beaches they'd be landing on, where they were likely to be, or any information of this sort. I understand that the reason we probably were not informed of the details of the plan was because it was felt that we had no need for it. But as I say, as it turned out, we certainly did have. On the 5th of April I received a dispatch from the JCS which postponed D-Day from 10 April by at least 48 and probably 98 hours. (Tab B) In the dispatch which informed me of the new D-Day of 17 April, I was also informed of a change in the concept of the support that I was to provide. Essentially, this change consisted of the fact that instead of convoying the invasion fleet my forces would be called on to provide area coverage.

STATEMENT: We had a very difficult time communicating with the Cuban invasion force ships. We didn't know the communications circuits of the ships, nor did we have other adequate means of communication. If the invasion force had been attacked, we'd have had a very difficult time communicationwise. At the same time that I received the change in the concept of the support I was to provide, I also received the first major changes in the rules of engagement. (Tab B)

- 7 -

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QUESTION: Who made the decision to change the rules of engagement?

After some discussion of this question, it was decided that the JCS memo of record on the change on the rules of engagement should be secured.

STATEMENT: We were also informed that it was desired that the chance of aborting the mission be minimized. I was informed that the Cuban invasion force was prepared to take risks to prevent the possibility of aborting the mission by overly anxious intervention.

STATEMENT: I wanted then, and I still want, more comprehensive, current intelligence on Cuba, particularly photographs. I am particularly concerned about Guantanamo. What Castro's reaction may be in this connection is a great concern to me.

STATEMENT: I am opposed to the use of DOD personnel in a covert operation. I believe that when U. S. forces go into an operation, they should go in under the cover of their U. S. uniform.

STATEMENT: In view of the extent to which we became involved in the Cuban operation, I believe that it should have been conducted by me, through a special task force. I believe that in an operation of this sort the control has to be centralized, and the control should be military. Even in this covert operation, at some stage it should have been handled by the regular military staff rather than a group restricted in size by security considerations.

It was agreed that Admiral Dennison would forward to the Study Group a copy of his record of the operation.

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- 8 -

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